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**PATRIOTISM
AND POPULAR EDUCATION**

HOW THE NEW EDUCATION ACT WORKS

"A widow told the magistrate at Thames Police Court to-day that she had been summoned before the Education Committee, who told her that her son, aged fourteen, who was at work, would, under the new Education Act, have to go back to school. 'I think this is very hard,' said the woman, 'as I have only another girl earning a little, and I cannot work myself, as my sight is failing.' She added that when she told the Education Committee that she had no means of support, they told her to go to the Guardians."

Pall Mall Gazette, 15 March 1919.

THE boy will be forced back to school, to learn against his will, things that will probably be useless to him in his daily work; his employers will be inconvenienced, and the widow will be pushed into the workhouse. There must be thousands of cases similar to this, involving extra cost to the State for the provision of teachers, extra cost to the ratepayers for education and poor law relief, and extra trouble for the Guardians and Education Committee.—And all to keep willing hands from useful work, when so much of it is crying out to be done. The wasteful mischief of it!

HENRY ARTHUR JONES, 17 March 1919.

PATRIOTISM AND POPULAR EDUCATION

WITH SOME THOUGHTS UPON

ENGLISH WORK AND ENGLISH PLAY, OUR EVENING AMUSEMENTS, SHAKESPEARE AND THE CONDITION OF OUR THEATRES, SLANG, CHILDREN ON THE STAGE, THE TRAINING OF ACTORS, ENGLISH POLITICS, BEFORE THE WAR, NATIONAL TRAINING FOR NATIONAL DEFENCE, WAR AND DESIGN IN NATURE, THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, THE FUTURE WORLD POLICY OF AMERICA, CAPITAL AND LABOUR, RELIGION, RECONSTRUCTION, THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS, SOCIAL PROPHETS AND SOCIAL PROPHECY, COMPETITION AND CO-OPERATION, THE BIOLOGIST AND THE SOCIAL REFORMER, HAND LABOUR AND BRAIN LABOUR, SCHOOL TEACHERS AND RAG-PICKERS, INTERNATIONALISM, AND MANY OTHER INTERESTING MATTERS

**THE WHOLE DISCOURSE BEING IN THE FORM OF A LETTER
ADDRESSED TO**

**THE RIGHT HON. H. A. L. FISHER
PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH BOARD OF EDUCATION**

BY

HENRY ARTHUR JONES

*"Doth not wisdom cry? And understanding put
forth her voice?"—PROVERBS, chap. viii, verse 1.*

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST ENGLISH EDITION

THESE hot discursive thoughts were thrown upon paper during the ten months that followed the British retreat to the outskirts of Amiens. They take their general complexion from the events of that tremendous time, and reflect its fluctuating hopes and fears, its anxieties and agitations and suspenses, from the dark hours of April to the magic reversal of our fortunes in July, onwards to the present hour when, having defeated the Germans, we seem to be preparing to defeat ourselves.

No book has ever grown more strangely. Starting to write a letter to the papers upon the edict that prevents children from appearing on our stage, I found it would be too long for their restricted space. On considering the matter, I saw it was involved with our whole system of Popular Education. I therefore addressed myself to the Minister of Education, and the first two chapters of the book were in his hands before he passed the recent Education Act.

Meantime it had daily become more and more evident that the question of National Education was of small moment in comparison with the question of National Existence. As the vast panorama displayed its succession of bewildering scenes, it caught me into its whirl. I was taken by that irresistible impulse which, when great events are happening, moves us to run out of

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doors and talk them over with our neighbours. I let my thoughts carry my pen wheresoever they would. Hence the want of unity, and perhaps of consistency, which may be found in these pages.

But I aimed not at unity or consistency, but only at a searching inquiry into the meaning of these stupendous happenings, and a faithful interpretation of them. Such unity and consistency as come from the single desire to speak the exact truth about all the matters I have touched—this unity and this consistency, I am sure I have attained.

I have given considerable space and attention to the affairs of the drama. But in presence of the illimitable tragedy that has been acted on the world's stage during the last few years, the English theatre has shrunk to the size and office of a silly toy; nor at present has it any other meaning, or pretensions, or ambitions. I was therefore glad to escape for a while to a platform whence a man may hail his fellow men with some hope of obtaining an intelligent hearing for intelligible speech. There can be no revival of English drama except as part of a national revival and a general awakening to our national duties and responsibilities. Of what use is it to nurse a sickly orchid in a hot-house, while all the field and garden of our national life is choked with weeds and rank confused growths? Conversely, of what use is it to hope for a national awakening to the realities and responsibilities of life, while the bulk of our population feed all their leisure with the grossest unrealities and trivialities? A nation may be sound and vigorous without developing any great school of national drama. But a foolish, degraded form of national drama is a symptom of moral and intellectual debasement.

Those who regard the great commandments as

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obsolete conventions will call the book reactionary. Its general tendency is against the present swing of popular thought. Therefore I cannot hope for any wide acceptance of its doctrines. Let them stand or fall as the future shall determine. I hold no brief for my opinions, except as facts shall confirm them.

However brokenly or mistakenly I have written, no Englishman has ever addressed his countrymen under the weight and shadow of greater events, or upon matters of more supreme importance. Involved as we are in still gathering national perplexities and obscurities, I may be excused for lighting up my little lantern, if haply we can discern where we are and whither we may be wandering.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

11 February 1919.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND ENGLISH EDITION

IT will be remembered, that when the word of the Lord came to Jonah, to cry against the Ninevites, the prophet at first declined the mission, and escaped to sea. Jonah was doubtless well aware that prophets who proclaim unpleasant truths to a nation run some danger of being stoned. However, three days' solitary confinement in the belly of a whale served to convince him that Heavenly warnings must be delivered, even at some personal risk.

When at length he addressed himself to his task, he seems to have fulminated against the Ninevites with undue vehemence and fervour. In definitely announcing the overthrow of their city in forty days, he clearly went beyond his instructions. Still, he succeeded in thoroughly alarming the Ninevites, and thus saved them from destruction.

The question arises, whether, if Jonah had not spread a panic of conviction that their ruin was imminent, overwhelming, irrevocable—the question arises, whether anything short of this conviction would have roused the Ninevites to take the urgent and stringent measures which alone averted the impending calamity.

Jonah was certainly in a dilemma. If he had not magnified the danger to the Ninevites, undoubtedly it would have fallen upon them, and they would have perished. By magnifying the danger, and persuading

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them of its reality, he stirred them to repentance, and saved the city. But at the cost of proving himself a false prophet.

The issue, although it was most satisfactory to the Ninevites, was a vexatious anti-climax for Jonah. He was naturally angry at being left in the lurch, and went and sulked under a gourd. He would have done better to put a bright face on the matter, and heartily to congratulate the Ninevites on their lucky and undeserved escape. To save his credit as a prophet, he might also have impressed upon them a strong reminder, that they were only spared by the intervention of a Special Providence. He might further have added, that it is not prudent for nations who are threatened with wide social disaster to trust that Providence will reverse the economy of the universe in their favour.

The Ninevites are now past being preached at, and equally past being prophesied about. Let us turn to ourselves. Six months have gone by since the first edition of this book appeared. The intervening course of events does not advise me to retract, or revise, what I wrote during the stress and uncertainties of last year. Rather, as the wheel comes to its full circle, I am urged to a more insistent affirmation and repetition of what is set down in these pages. No review of the book that I have seen has made any attempt to controvert the facts and arguments I have brought forward, or to disprove the conclusions I have drawn from them. They remain unsilenced, unrefuted. Till they are discredited and overthrown, they issue a standing challenge to our present system of Popular Education, to the confusions and fallacies of political thought that it fosters, and to the social disorder that it encourages. Let my arguments and conclusions be examined. If they are unsound and

false, I am the first to wish that they may fall to the ground.

Eighty-five per cent. of our population have to earn their living by manual labour before the social machine will work. We are educating about eighty-five per cent. of them in such a way that they will hate and avoid manual labour. Inevitably, that million of houses does not get built. Inevitably, it is the workers who will suffer first, and suffer most, and suffer longest. For two generations we have been busily teaching our masses what they are only very remotely concerned to *know*, and have neglected to teach them, nay, have forbidden them to learn, what they are imperatively concerned to *do* and *make*. We have made manual labour ridiculous and repulsive to them. There is not a home or a farm, or a shop, or an office, or a factory in the Kingdom that does not suffer delay and obstruction in consequence.

However, I need not strain my voice to enforce what is day by day more loudly proclaimed by the clamour of events. The catch words and catch phrases of the war—"making the world safe for democracy," "self-determination," "a brotherhood of nations," and the like—are proving themselves to be no sterling coins of thought, valid at the counter of fact, but the worthless forgeries of bankrupt idealists, not negotiable anywhere. Even before it is constituted, the League of Nations begins to jeer at its promoters. What else could they expect? The first ominous result of the attempt to govern the world by a League of Nations, has been to weaken that good understanding between England and America which is the only assurance of the world's peace. Is not this a sufficient warning of the mischief-breeding tendency of a League of Nations? Surely the

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statesmen of the world have contentious matters enough on their hands without multiplying complications and possible causes of quarrel in a future whose contingencies and demands not one of them can foresee or guess at.

America has rejected the League of Nations, rightly judging that no country should pledge itself to deal with successive threatening international situations by involved, amiable, abstract rulers; rightly judging that no threatening international situation can be wisely dealt with until it has actually arisen; and until it is so far developed and defined that each country may take that course which its honour and its permanent interests mark out for it at that precise moment.

America has rejected the League of Nations. Will not the statesmen of England and France and Italy accept that verdict? Will they not forsake this perilous whimsy, own that they have made a mistake and, ceasing to fumble about with international misunderstandings that may threaten the world in fifty years' time, turn to the urgent necessities that beset their own countries at the present hour?

Above all our confusions, clear cut against the sky, plain for all of us to read, stand the two opposing signposts, the one directing all our national aims and hopes and activities towards Internationalism, the other directing all our national aims and hopes and activities towards Patriotism. The time shortens. O England, which road will you take?

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

20 November 1919.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

To the RIGHT HON. HERBERT A. L. FISHER,

President of the Board of Education.

(March 1918)

DEAR MR. FISHER,

Now that your Education Bill has taken its main outlines and permanent general form, and is safe from any serious injury or wide amendment, may I, without impertinence, set down some insurgent thoughts upon the subject, which for a long time past have been collecting themselves in my mind, and which the remorseless events and emergencies of these last few years drive to seek utterance? I can scarcely hope that they will be of any present service to the cause of Education, for they run away in many different directions from the main stream of national opinion. This, in itself, offers some presumption that they are more or less ill adapted to prevailing conditions. And it is rather with a forlorn and fugitive desire to help you in moulding your next Education Bill, than with the view of inducing you to change some features of the present one, that I beg leave to lay these thoughts before you. They have the merit, or defect, of being written by one who is wholly removed from party politics, and is therefore free to be concerned only for what he conceives to be the welfare of the State.

May I be allowed then to wander round this most thorny and difficult subject of Popular Education, in searching but discursive, variable, and often perhaps

illogical and contradictory thought, and to take you with me so far as you have patience and inclination to go? It is necessary that our thoughts upon any subject should at first be variable, tentative, and contradictory, before they can clarify and settle into steadfast and assured conviction.

It is with no wish to hamper or obstruct you in your arduous and immensely complicated task, that I bring before you these unwelcome facts and inconvenient comments and suggestions. But perhaps they may serve to put before you certain aspects of the question which have hitherto lain somewhat outside the views and aims of experts in Education, but which seem to call for serious consideration. In any case I offer you as my justification for addressing this letter to you personally, the comforting reminder that you are not obliged to read it. And this easy way of escape from my importunities lies equally open to all who may wish to ignore them.

When your Education Bill was in its earliest stages in the House of Commons, I was lunching with a lady who, in the dearth of servants, had taken as domestic helps the wife and children of a gardener, absent at the war. A little before lunch, the elder girl of fourteen came in from school, much worried with a paper of questions that had been set her. "Tell me what you know about Cicero," was one of the demands upon her; and the other questions were of a lofty and more or less abstract kind, all equally remote from the daily duties which the girl would have to perform for the whole of her life. The child was about the average of her class in physique and intelligence, certainly not in any marked degree below the average. She was genuinely anxious to scrape up as much acquaintance with Cicero

as would tide her over any difficulties at school. To this end she sought assistance from her mother, who was cooking the lunch. How far this sudden call upon her classical acquirements deranged the good gardener's wife, I cannot say, but we certainly had a very tough and leathery omelette. A short conversation that I had with the girl after lunch, was enough to show very clearly that whatever precarious items of information about Cicero she could temporarily pack into her mind, would probably wander out of it into vacuity within a fortnight.

Further, granting that she could retain them, she could not, I am persuaded, put them into relation with her general conception of Roman history and literature, or with her stock of other knowledge, or with whatever coherent theory she may form of human life. That is to say, whatever scattered facts she may have been able to glean about Cicero, will not be of the least use to her, or to any living being, in the tremendous struggle which we shall be called upon to endure in the coming generation. They will not, I am convinced, lead her to a further knowledge of Cicero, so that she may be able to guide her friendships by Cicero's essay on Friendship, or to solace her declining years by his essay on Old Age. I question if at any time during her life she will be able to comprehend three pages of the translations of either of these essays. If any facts about Cicero remain in her memory, which is highly improbable, they will remain as dead facts, and hindrances to whatever useful mental activities she may possess. Meantime, the omelette was spoilt.

Sir, this poor flustered child is the type of hundreds of thousands of her class whom we are educating, not in knowledge that will be useful to them, and helpful

to us all; not in things that are congenial to their natural ability; not in the very fine arts that make for domestic welfare and happiness, but in smatterings of recondite matters that can have no bearings on their actual life, and that, so far as they are remembered at all, tend only to a state of mental bewilderment.

I gladly acknowledge that here and there among our working classes are to be found girls of fourteen who can appreciate Cicero, and who should be taught all that they can learn about him, so that they can fitly place him in an ordered scheme of general knowledge. And these girls are quite likely to be those who will make the best omelettes. Oppressed as I am with taxation, I am still willing to pay for them to be taught all about Cicero, and all about making omelettes. But these girls are one in a thousand, and most likely they will themselves take eager care of nine-tenths of their higher education. I am not willing to pay for the masses of our working classes to be taught a heap of what is to them quite mentally indigestible matter, which in the vast majority of cases will be thrown out of their minds almost before it is learned, and which, so far as any result is obtained from it, wastes and misdirects their mental energy, and is neither useful nor pleasurable to them, nor profitable to the State.

I shall be told that I am talking old-fashioned exploded nonsense. Let me try to justify myself.

First, let me say that I cordially accept, and am ready to subscribe, in both senses, to the general rule that every child in the kingdom shall be educated in such a way that whatever *physical* and *mental* powers he possesses shall be developed to the extent, and in the direction, that shall make him most useful to the State. Here I suppose I am in agreement with you. Let me

claim that this general rule quite excludes the immense majority of children from being educated by the State in such a way as will fully develop all their *mental* powers, or in most cases a third part of their mental powers; or in such a way as will develop these mental powers to the individual interest and personal advancement of the child himself, either intellectually, or socially, or materially. Some potential Miltons must remain mute and inglorious. Some potential Masters of Trinity, who happen to be born in a carboniferous region, must, willy nilly, forgo academic distinction and spend their time and strength in digging coal. There must always be a vast waste of potential mental energy, as of everything else in Nature.

There is, for instance, an enormous waste of sun-power, but we do not utilize it when we laboriously try to extract sunshine from cucumbers. We do not utilize the waste mental abilities of our masses by indiscriminately forcing all of them to learn facts about Cicero, and other abstract matters which will be quite useless to them in after life, and whose acquirement consumes a certain amount of energy that might be profitably given to the service of the State. In that way we may make one fairly accomplished scholar and perhaps fifty prigs in a thousand, while all the others will go their own way and joyfully forget all about Cicero in the study of the latest sixpenny love story, or the latest tip about a football match.

I am writing here in the interests of the State, and with the object of turning out citizens useful to the State; and I am concerned to show, what is apparently overlooked by many of our experts, that in Education, as in most other matters, the interests of the individual child are often, and in many ways, opposed to the in-

terests of the State. We are sending our boys out to France to be maimed and killed. It is not at all in their individual interest to go, but it is for the welfare of the State. And if we are prepared to bid our children make this supreme sacrifice for the State, so in the matter of Education we must not give all our children, or even the majority of our children, that education which we would desire to give them in their own individual interest, and which would most thoroughly develop all their mental powers, but just that education which will make them most useful servants of the State. It is not, I affirm, in the interests of the State to have every child highly educated except in those matters and aptitudes that will enable him best to fulfil his duties to the State. This perhaps may sound like a truism, but it is practically denied in the working and in the main tendencies of our present system of Popular Education.

Nobody will deny that Popular Education has conferred immense benefits and advantages not only upon the working classes, but indirectly upon all classes of Englishmen. It may be cheerfully acknowledged that in many ways it has transformed our lives for the better. Popular Education has given us much. Has it given us all, or most of the good things that we reasonably hoped from it? What has our present system taken away from us? Has it not to a great and increasing extent taken away from us some of the most precious things of all? Has it not foisted upon us many undesirable and some pernicious things? Has it not tended to foster some habits and ways of thought that, unless they are checked, may ultimately prove destructive to us?

I suppose I shall be thought to be crazy if I question

that there is an immense balance to the good on account of Popular Education, an overwhelming credit, and a few mere inconsiderable items of debit.

Who can strike the balance? It all depends upon what qualities of human nature we most highly esteem, what virtues in a people are ultimately found to be most necessary to their welfare and indeed to their existence, what relative values we place on these qualities and virtues. Before the balance can be struck, it will have to be decided what are our present main national aims, and how far we are directing our national energies in their pursuit. Some of us would say that underneath these questions lie the more fundamental questions as to what is the true welfare of the State, and how far our present national aims are directed to attain it. This goes down to bedrock. But the times are such that we must find sure foundations or perish. And until we know what kind of welfare we desire for our State, and until we are substantially united in our national aims to attain it, all our legislation must be tentative, and will probably be blundering and mischievous. Now in this great matter of Education, it seems to me that educational experts have not sufficiently grasped this cardinal fact, that the immediate interests of the individual child are in the majority of cases opposed in many ways to the interests of the State; that as in the other warfare, many children must necessarily be sacrificed so far as their higher education is concerned; that they cannot be educated to their utmost mental capacity, or to anything like their utmost mental capacity, without wasting energies that will be more and more urgently demanded by the State for more pressing and more useful employment. I say this law is neglected by educational ex-

perts; indeed many of them do not suspect its existence. Yet it is surely operative, as will be seen before many generations have passed. I will not dwell here upon the very evident fact, that the majority of our people are not naturally capable of receiving or assimilating an education that requires them to take more than three steps in abstract thought.

Let us leave the theoretical side of the question and glance at the actual working of Popular Education.

Your Bill will not essentially change our present system. It widens and enlarges it. What type of English working man has been evolved and standardized by Popular Education, so far as we can separate its effects from all the other influences and tendencies of our civilization that have also helped to mould him? How far has our system of education really educated him in the things that it most concerns him to know and to live by, and most concerns the nation that he should know and practise?

I will take the two tests that seem to me the most trustworthy—the test of his work, and the yet surer test of his play. But I am willing that any other tests shall be applied, provided that they ensure that the effects of Popular Education can be traced, without confusing them with the effects of other agencies. First there is the test of work.

**PATRIOTISM
AND POPULAR EDUCATION**

PATRIOTISM AND POPULAR EDUCATION

CHAPTER I

(*March—April 1918*)

My old Carpenter—"Artistic, sixpence three farthings"—A well educated working man—Dame Nature a harsher "exploiter" than the capitalist—Working men cheat their brother working men—Not a question of Capital and Labour, but of honesty or dishonesty—A call for the Parsons—Proposal to ship some of them to Kikuyu—Robinson Crusoe and Friday's neglected education—Deplorable ignorance of Friday of matters that did not concern him—Consequent economic stability of the island—Friday's capacity for abstract thought—General education the enemy of good craftsmanship—Monstrous and ridiculous proposal to drill our boys for the future defence of their country—Equally monstrous and ridiculous proposal to teach our girls what will be useful to them as wives and mothers—Enlargement of dictum of the Minister of Education concerning general education.

POPULAR Education has now been in force for nearly fifty years. I have in my mind a fairly typical working man of the better class of fifty years ago. He was a carpenter in a small provincial town. He had received a very limited education, I suppose at a National School of those days, which I daresay he left at about the age of twelve. He was probably then apprenticed to his trade. He must have learned it thoroughly in all its branches; for when I knew him

in his late middle age, he could and did make with his own hands, the whole of a large useful cabinet for a middle-class sitting room. That cabinet, by its sound workmanship, its sensible shape, its fitness and utility, would utterly shame and condemn anything that a middle-class family could buy at furnishing shops in 1914, at three or four times its price. You cannot get as good workmanship to-day in its class. He was equally adept and honest and thorough in whatever job he was called in to do.

After fifty years of Popular Education, it is almost impossible for a lower or middle-class family to get a drawer that will slide, or a window-sash that will work easily, or a door that will close properly. The carpentry work in our cheap modern houses and apartments is for the most part abominably bad, inconvenient, treacherous, and perishable. The design and shape of most of our modern furniture justifies the current slang epithet, "appalling." In all the decoration of our lower and middle-class homes, the more taste we pretend to, the less taste we have. You may have noticed the unconscious self-deceit and the unblushing impudence of those many articles of use and decoration which are ticketed in shop windows, "Artistic, sixpence three farthings." They loudly proclaim that the people who design them, the people who make them, the people who sell them, and the people who use them, must have had a general education that has vitiated their taste, and deprived them of their apprehension of beauty. The daily use of the word "artistic" is a terrible condemnation of our present system of Popular Education. It is one of the many words upon whose use a very heavy tax should be laid for the benefit of our impoverished exchequer.

I do not say that the state of things I have noted is entirely the effect of Popular Education. I do say that it is very palpably the correlative of Popular Education; and that its continuance and apparent growth is a grave reproach, if not a severe condemnation of our present system.

To return to my carpenter. He read very little, scarcely anything, except the local weekly paper on Saturday, and on other days, and chiefly on Sundays, the Bible and the "Pilgrim's Progress." Thus he had a very close acquaintance with some of the best literature, and was quite ignorant of trash. This was evident in his daily talk, for he often coined a sentence not wholly unworthy to appear in either of those books. He worked very hard, often twelve or fourteen hours a day, and he gave his light evenings to his garden. And being temperate and fully occupied with his work, he lived to a good old age. I cannot remember whether he had any political opinions.

I will allow that my carpenter was somewhat above the average, but not so much as to make it unfair to present him as a type of his class; for his match could readily be found in most English towns of that day, and of the previous three hundred years. In all that counts as a sound education, that is, an education which fits a man to serve the interests of the State in his particular calling, while affording him a reasonably happy, contented, and healthy life—in these essentials my carpenter was a better educated man than the corresponding carpenter of to-day.

Further than this, though his general outlook on life was very narrow and cramped; though he was childishly ignorant and prejudiced and superstitious on many important subjects, yet, on the whole, he lived a richer,

fuller, more admirable, more enviable life than the average carpenter of to-day. But the chief point for the interests of the State, is that he was a thoroughly good carpenter of a numerous, widely-spread class. Such a carpenter can scarcely be found in all England to-day.

Now carpentry is perhaps of all occupations the most universal and the most necessary in all ages, and all lands. It is the one that is most necessary to the comfort of our homes. I am at present enduring great discomfort from the radical dishonesty of much of the woodwork and fittings in my house, which is quite modern.

I will beg you, sir, to place these facts in due relation to our system of Popular Education, and to tell me why it is, that while before its advent it was almost impossible to get a piece of bad carpentry in lower and middle-class homes, it is now almost impossible to get a piece of good carpentry?

I shall be told that it is due to the capitalist. Nobody hates many of the forms and aspects of our present-day commercialism more than I do, or more despises the base truckers who fatten upon it. But all attempts to get rid of the capitalist have ended in farcical or tragical failure; whether made in quite small communities, or on a large national scale, as lately in Russia. And if we make the State our sole capitalist, as some desire, we shall find it a more harsh, cruel, capricious, and grinding "exploiter" than any private master. We shall also find it a most incapable, bungling, and dishonest employer, who, having muddled all our concerns and bewildered and stultified itself, will slip out of the mess by dissolving itself, leaving us in universal poverty and despair, to be "exploited" by

grim old Dame Nature, the harshest and cruellest "exploiter" and employer of all. For she knows no pity and allows no argument. She will enter into no conference or arbitration. She makes her own award, and straightway enforces it, "Work or Starve." Sometimes it is "Work *and* starve." Sometimes it is briefly "Starve." And there is no appeal. Compared with her bleak and iron governance, the worst tyranny of our present employers and "exploiters" is as mothers' mercies and as fathers' blessings. Witness what is happening in Russia to-day where famine, black typhus, misery, desolation, madness, murder, and anarchy shriek out to us that the corrupt and abominable despotism of the Czar was a mild and beneficent rule compared with the despotism of whimsies and fallacies and sophistries.

No, sir, it is not the capitalist. The capitalist does not *make* the rickety chairs, the drawers that will not slide, and all the other trumpery inconveniences that make our working-class homes so miserable and uninhabitable. It is something to his profit to get them made well, though I daresay he cares little for this. I am not seeking to defend the capitalist. I have not much liking for him. And I have a real fondness for working men, and so much sympathy that I would like to be counted one of them. And I think I am so entitled, for when I was twelve and a half years old, that is, three months after I had finally left school, I was working sixteen hours a day. I hope this will show that I have no class bias.

To return. The capitalist does not *make* all the villainous paraphernalia of our working-class homes. These things are *made* by the working classes themselves, for themselves. And as by far the greater part of such

things are manufactured for the use of the working classes, it follows that it is mainly the working classes who are cheated when they are made badly. The working man thinks he is making them for an employer, who is "exploiting" him and whom he has been taught to regard as his deadly enemy. He is really making them mainly for his brother working man, whom he is cheating when he does this necessary home work badly.

No capitalist could have driven my old carpenter to make his bits of home furniture badly. He could not do his work badly, because in the first place he had so thoroughly and soundly learned his trade, that good solid work was a habit that had become his second nature. A sound knowledge of his craft was his "higher" education. And as he regularly worked about twelve hours a day, he had plenty of leisure in those twelve hours to do his work well. He needed not to scamp it. His mind and energies were chiefly employed upon his work. He put his heart and brain into it, and thus unconsciously served the best interests of the State. He was thoroughly educated in what it chiefly concerned him to know for his own good, and for the good of the State. He had also been taught, even before his school days, that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."¹ His interpretation of this and kindred texts compelled him to do his work well, for it made him afraid to do it badly. He had a deep and abiding sense of his duty to his employers, and he did not look upon them as his natural and mortal enemies. Therefore, when he made something for a working-class home, he made it well, and his brother working man was benefited.

¹ Proverbs, chap. i, verse 7.

What has all this to do with Popular Education? It is the very warp and essence of it!

Working men make for each other all their own articles of every-day use, all the apparel of their homes. If these things are not made well, the fault must rest either upon themselves in not giving sufficient time, or skill, or thought, or energy to this primary business of life; or upon a system of Popular Education that must be radically vicious or defective because it does not teach them the first great lesson of all education—to do their particular work in the world honestly, and with all their might. In other words, in not teaching them that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge—putting a wide and practical interpretation on this text. When this first great lesson is left untaught, much of what is curiously called “higher education” is likely to be useless and mischievous to themselves, and ultimately dangerous to the State.

It is not a question of capital and labour. It is a question of honesty or dishonesty of workmanship in each particular calling. When, as in the carpentry of our homes, the general workmanship is slack, unskilled, and perishable, it is the working classes who suffer first and suffer most, and have to bear the chief brunt of the hardships. For they are by far the most numerous class, and are inevitably the nearest and most accessible to any and every assault of national misfortune or error. When the carpentry of our homes is honest, thorough, skilled, and durable, it is the working classes who are mainly and most widely benefited. For the additional comfort and convenience means so much more to them than to the well-to-do, and this additional comfort and convenience is distributed over the largest area. No encroachments and tyranny of the capitalist

can destroy what comforts are to be got from good and serviceable home carpentry, if only the carpenters themselves are doing this work in sufficient quantity for their brother working men. And no dethronement of the capitalist and the middleman, even to the level of compelling them to make bad and rickety furniture with their own hands, will in the least add to the comfort and convenience of the working-class home, if the carpenters do not study to make the work they do for their comrades as honest and durable as they can.

Let us take care that in our just anger against the middleman and the "exploiter," we do not forget to kindle to a fiercer heat, a juster anger against ourselves for all the sloppy, perfunctory, dishonest, careless, useless, harmful work we are doing in the world. Let us take care that while we are mainly busy in making a clean sweep of the capitalist and the exploiter, that iron, grim, implacable old Dame isn't preparing to make a clean sweep of us. A very short taste of her "exploiting" will make us cry out for somebody to "exploit" us out of our misery. We may even be sorry that we didn't put up with our present "exploiters," bad and corrupt as many of them are.

Sir, for many centuries to come, perhaps while time endures, the great majority of mankind will necessarily have to be "exploited" in all the main affairs of life by somebody or the other. In Russia we may notice that it is the Germans who have temporarily taken over this necessary and fundamental business. What a strange *dénouement* if Nature's answer to the whimsies of the Pacifists should be establishment of a line of military exploiters! She is quite capable of a gigantic hoax of this kind—witness the innumerable millions whom she has led to their destruction, dancing after

some painted Jack-o-Lantern of political or spiritual delusion. She is always playing these hideous tricks on people who nurse whimsies; and her darling victim is not the dull, stupid man, but the fervent Impossibilist, and the cheap-jack purveyor of gorgeous dreams to the multitude.

The first duty of Popular Education is to teach that all careless, scamped, and dishonest work is a crime against the State. Till working-men learn this hard lesson, no adjustments of capital and labour, no massacre of middle men and exploiters, will better their lot; and no classical or mathematical attainments will be other than foolish and wasteful furbelows—a spangled cloak thrown over a body eaten by cancer.

Here I think I hear somebody calling out loudly for the parsons. I am sure that many of them have done hard and fruitful and unselfish service in the cause of Popular Education. But have not the majority of them been far more concerned to teach their individual whimsies, than the plain commandments by which men live? Have they not insisted that these varied, shifting, inconsistent, contradictory, incomprehensible whimsies shall be made the foundation of Popular Education, and that unless these whimsies are bound up in assorted sets with the multiplication table, there shall be no multiplication table at all? Have not the parsons been the great hinderers and obstructors of Popular Education? And might it not be wise in the interests of Popular Education and of religion, as soon as sufficient tonnage is available, to ship all the parsons who cannot agree amongst themselves to Kikuyu, their happy hunting-ground, their favourite cockpit, their holiday resort, their Mecca, their spiritual home, and their unhonoured grave?

Nevertheless, we may be grateful to the many of them who have taught, even with much admixture of whimsy, the first great lesson of Popular Education, that honest, careful, useful, productive work for our fellows, each in our allotted sphere, is the first and main duty of us all to the State. Whatever else is taught is secondary, and comparatively unimportant. For it is clear that if this lesson is thoroughly learned, and if this duty is thoroughly done, a condition of internal general well-being must necessarily follow. It is also clear that the allotted sphere of the vast majority of us, must be one that requires of us constant, hard, dirty labour that will necessarily absorb the greater part of our physical energy, and will not leave us a large surplus of mental energy to acquire facts about Cicero, or an unlimited leisure to play golf and attend football matches.

I am quite willing to pay for other people's children to be taught all about Cicero, and therein to excel me; and this with money that I have earned, and badly need to make provision for my own children, in whose favour I am perhaps a little prejudiced—I say I am quite willing that my cash shall be thus disbursed, if only it can be proved that such teaching helps the cooking of the communal omelette, and the easy working of the domestic apparatus, and is on the whole the best way of spending my money for the welfare of the State. But I have my doubts.

I will go further and own myself willing to try my hand at cooking the omelette myself, while paying for our future servants to be taught all about Cicero—if only it can be proved that such a direction of our several energies, is on the whole the best that can be de-

vised for the welfare of the State. But I have my doubts.

For myself, Cicero has been something of an educational luxury. I have sparingly indulged in him. Still he had many good qualities, and I remember that on one occasion he declared that he had saved the State. If a knowledge of Cicero's life and writings will, in some occult way, help our domestic servants and our carpenters to save the State, I am enthusiastically in favour of letting them know all about him as quickly as possible. But I have my doubts.

I am quite sure that it cannot be either to their own advantage, or for the welfare of the State, that our domestic servants and carpenters shall be taught a few facts about Cicero, and smatterings of science, mathematics, and literature, while the cookery and carpentry in working-class homes remain in their present miserable state.

I cordially give a general assent to your dictum that "no country in the long run suffers an economic injury from an improvement in the general education of its population." But this is a vague and abstract proposition, whose successful working lies in its correct application to the pressing necessities of the population, to their varied mental and physical capacities, and to their individual duties to the State. It is governed and qualified in a hundred ways that educational experts never seem to suspect.

For instance, Friday's education had been deplorably neglected. It was certainly prudent of Robinson Crusoe to educate him out of cannibalism and into Christianity. But Friday's general education seems to have been untimely cut short at this very elementary

stage. He knew as little about Cicero as my school-girl of fourteen. Any facts about Cicero that Robinson Crusoe may have been able to impart, would probably have tended in some small measure to quicken Friday's mental powers, and to make him a more intelligent companion. Yet I question whether Robinson Crusoe would have been wise to spend much time on Friday's education in matters relating to Cicero. A few scattered facts would certainly have been of no possible use to Friday. While if he had made any approach to scholarship in this and kindred subjects, the cuisine and household carpentry of the island would have suffered most disastrously.

Robinson Crusoe could have given to Friday a body of collated information about Cicero, only at the cost to himself of much labour and valuable time. Friday could have received such a body of information about Cicero only at the cost of much labour and valuable time. It is evident that if the pair of them had given any considerable amount of labour and time to Cicero, the State would have tottered. On Robinson Crusoe's island, the principle you have laid down would have been terribly limited in its application by the prevailing conditions and circumstances.

Your dictum is that "no country in the long run suffers an economic injury from an improvement in the general education of its population." By general education I understand you to mean, knowledge and learning that are not directly concerned with the daily occupation of the individual, or with his duty to the State; knowledge and learning which are indeed largely apart from, and have no traceable connection with the occupation of the individual, or with his duty to the State; and which are given to him with a view to raise

his general intellectual status, on the principle that is supposed to regulate the successful aspersion of a man's character by slander, namely, that "if you throw mud enough, some of it is bound to stick."

The application of your dictum to Robinson Crusoe's island seems to raise a few provoking questions, such as:

(1) What amount of time and mental energy can Robinson Crusoe afford to spare for Friday's general education, that could not be better employed for the welfare of the two in some other way?

(2) What amount of time and energy can Friday afford to spare for the purpose of being generally educated, that could not be better employed for the welfare of the two in some other way?

(3) Granting unreservedly that it is highly desirable that Friday's intellectual status should be raised, and that all his mental powers should be fully developed—so far as is compatible with the welfare of the State—how far is Friday capable of assimilating instruction beyond that which relates to his daily work, and his duty to the State? What is Friday's natural capacity for abstract thought? For it is upon the degree of natural capacity for abstract thought, that nearly all the worth and profit of what you call general education depends.

(4) Might not the island suffer a very grave economic injury, to the infinite discredit of our theory, if Friday's general education were carried outside the limits I have indicated—if, for instance, Robinson Crusoe in a frenzy of educational zeal were to insist that Friday, against his own inclination and natural capacity, should learn a number of irrelevant facts about Cicero, and other remote matters?

It may be urged that our conditions in England do

not offer any parallel to the conditions prevailing on Robinson Crusoe's island. Sir, for a long age to come, this island of ours, like Robinson Crusoe's, will be besieged by many iron and cruel necessities, and it will be of the first importance to us, as to him, so to regulate and husband and apportion the relative expenditure of our physical and mental energies, as to obtain those results that will most certainly be profitable to the State as a whole, and will help to build it upon the surest foundations. And with this end in view, we should give the masses of our people, not that education which we might desire for them, which might most fully develop all their mental powers, and which might be most profitable to many of them individually, but just that amount, and that kind of very unequal, and very varied education which will best assure the safety of the State. One of our first concerns most intimately connected with Popular Education, indeed, a main part of it, should be to see that all the common work that is done for the common people, shall be done well and honestly, and by people who are not ashamed of doing it, who have not been educated *away* from it and are not diverted from its necessary accomplishment by other aims and pursuits.

I gladly recognize that there are clauses in your bill which, if wisely administered, are likely to bring about some improvement in the direction I have indicated. But if it is claimed that, ~~up~~ to the present, Popular Education has tended towards this desirable result, I can only point to my old carpenter; to the condition of our household carpentry; to all the dreadful objects that desecrate our working- and middle-class and even upper-class homes; to the number of girls of fourteen who, to their great mental distraction, are being taught

irrelevant facts about Cicero *before* they have been taught plain cookery; and to many other trades and callings necessary to the daily comfort of us all, in which the first great lesson of doing thoroughly and honestly one's own individual work in the world, has been left untaught, and is constantly flouted; in which a terribly defective education in one's individual work, seems to be the correlative of an abortive attempt at "general" education; in which natural aptitudes and abilities are left undeveloped, and carelessness, neglect, and slovenliness prevail; apparently because the physical or mental energies which should always first be given to one's immediate work in the world, have been drawn off to ineptitudes and wild digressions.

I selected domestic carpentry because it is, as I said, a basic universal industry, which affects us all in our homes. I do not say that Popular Education is accountable for all the bad carpentry that is done. I do say that concurrently with the spread of Popular Education, carpenters generally have received an increasingly defective education in their own craft. It cannot be for the welfare of the State that carpenters should receive a "general" education that, while admittedly it does not directly fit them for the exercise of their own calling, does yet permit, and perhaps indirectly encourage, a very casual, perfunctory knowledge, and a very slovenly practice of that calling. I am not grudging the carpenters their general or higher education. I am asking that it shall be made quite secondary and auxiliary to a thorough mastery of their own craft, and to as much diligent and absorbing practice of that craft as may be found necessary for the welfare of the State.

Let us hope that the past and present disorder is

merely transitional—and transitory. And let me again cordially acknowledge that your Education Bill allows and encourages many improvements in these matters.

But legislative enactments have a bad habit of not producing the effects for which they are designed, and of producing a number of indirect consequences, which are often obstructive to their main purpose. Much will depend upon the instruments who work it; much more will depend upon its discriminate adaptation to the enormous mass of heterogeneous humanity which is to be subjected to its provisions.

And here again we may have good hope. For the great bulk of the raw material of humanity to be brought under the new Education Act is sound, rough English stock. Every day brings us new proofs of the magnificent quality of its fibre, of its inexhaustible vigour and power of endurance.

What may not be hoped from a nation that casually throws-off, as a bird moults a feather, heroes in millions, Coeur-de-lions in hordes, and Sidneys in battalions? What may not be hoped from such a nation, if only it is rightly trained, disciplined, and led; every member being first taught, as the cardinal maxim of Popular Education, to do his own individual work honestly, and with all his might?

Whatever Popular Education has taught our multitudes, however many and great the benefits it has bestowed upon them, it surely has not up to the present taught them this first great lesson—witness the badly latched door that is intermittently slamming and clattering as I write this letter, and that leads me to ask whether some of the time and energy given to the general and higher education of our carpenters, might

not be more profitably spent upon special problems relating to the correct adjustment of door fastenings.

There is no doubt that general education does raise the level of intelligence in the community, and in many ways add to their pleasures—if not wholly to their well-being. But are there not good grounds for thinking that general education is often the enemy of that thorough special education in our individual work and duty which is the first necessity for the ultimate welfare of the State? Is not general education often the unsuspected enemy of good craftsmanship? It is certainly the constant companion of much bad craftsmanship. Does not “general” education often turn out a very poor scholar in place of an accomplished workman?

Our future necessities are such that we shall be far more in need of workmen than scholars. We have at our disposal only a limited amount of time, of physical energy, and of mental capacity. There is pressing need for the most rigorous economy in all of them. How can we so employ and apportion them as to get the best results for the State?

Good carpenters are one of the primary necessities of any society. My old carpenter was produced by the simple process of thoroughly teaching him his trade and his duty to his neighbour, while he was very young, and then leaving him to get his higher education for himself. At the age of sixteen he was probably doing twelve hours a day useful work for the State. And he lived to a good old age.

I do not propose to revert to a system of universal education on that basis. Any child with quite exceptional mental ability should be given an opportunity

to develop it in any way that may most be useful to the State, and even to develop it quite independently of any services he may be able to render the State. Children of mental ability considerably above the average should also be selected, as no doubt they already are, for appropriate higher education. For unquestionably we shall be amply repaid for any expenditure we may lavish upon them.

Of the remaining mass, that is the vast majority of children, the boys should be carefully divided into groups, according to their indicated capacity for different kinds of physical employment, or for occupations which do not call for the possession of much general or special knowledge, or for the exercise of any conspicuous mental powers. They should be given as much general education as would be almost certain to prove useful to them in their probable occupation. They should be given ample opportunities for higher education, if they chose to avail themselves of it. But higher education should not be forced upon any of them.

All the boys should be thoroughly drilled and taught the first elements of soldiering, just enough to fit them for further training in the defence of their country, if that dread duty should be forced upon them. For by the neglect of this obvious part of Popular Education, England is at this hour pouring out her children's blood in torrents of sacrifice, which may prove to be more lowering to the future vitality of our race than even the cruel and hideous factory system.

If it is denied that some measure of such training will be required of us in future, I will only say that as the stern lesson of the Boer War was shouted at England's deaf ears in vain, so in vain has this latter and more terrible lesson been written for us in fire, and

tears, and blood of our dearest and bravest. In vain will you bring in measures of Popular Education. Educate us how you will. Teach us what you please. It matters not. We cannot learn.

For granted the monstrous impossibility that Germany should win this war, all the forces of civilization will still have to be raised against her in ceaseless insurrection. And granted that we gain a decisive victory, we and our present Allies shall find ourselves the arbiters and chief supervisors of the destinies of forty-six nations and communities, each with its own separate aims, ambitions, jealousies, and intrigues. Do we realize what that means?

Doubtless a long peace will ensue. After the Israelites had exhausted themselves and their neighbours in a bloody struggle "the land had rest for forty years." And up to the present, this seems to be human nature's limit of endurable abstinence from fighting. After a great war humanity always promises itself the millennium. But this time we say the millennium is assured, and is positively within sight. There it lies, smiling with endless peace and universal brotherhood and happiness, as soon as this war is ended.

If a watertight League of Nations can be devised, and got to work, it will tend to promote immediate peace, and may possibly secure it for—shall we say forty years? Is Germany to come in? Do we know so little of human nature, as not to foresee that immediately there will be currents of separate interest, jealousies, intrigues, disruptions, probably leading to two main divided parties of nations; not necessarily leading to immediate war, but surely emphasizing the necessity of keeping some body of armed force? Even if Germany were left out, the same conditions of af-

fairs would be brought about in the course of time. In any case, England proposes to take a leading part in overlooking the destinies of forty-six nations and communities, all with their own separate and conflicting interests and ambitions; and, if necessary, to enforce them to keep the peace. How is that to be done without holding some considerable national armament always in readiness?

Doubtless, too, the ascendancy of democracy will, on the whole, tend towards peace in the immediate future. Never again will a blasphemous and murderous *cabotin* have it in his power to nod and devastate the wide earth for his glory. But democracies will fight when they press upon each other and their interests clash. And this is likely to happen more and more frequently as the fertile spaces of the world become more and more occupied.

Again, democracies are apt to become inflamed against each other for no very wise reasons. It might be well for our working classes to note that a great number of the Russian proletariat seem to be inspired with a greater hatred of England than of Germany.

Granted that a forty years' peace is probable, who can ensure it? Almost every wide forecast made before and after the war was proved to be wrong; in most cases wildly, absurdly, and perniciously wrong. Who can foretell the disposition of power, the relations of nations towards each other, the shape of large events, the drift of the world's affairs in twenty years' time from to-day? That is, at the time when the boys who are now to be brought under the new Education Act, will be approaching the prime of early manhood, and will be most fit to render active service to the State. If anyone had told us twenty years ago, that of the boys

then flocking to our Board schools, every one would be conscripted in a last desperate necessity to offer his life for his country, we should have laughed at him and counted him a madman. We did laugh at those who warned us of our peril.

If one could gain the fulfilment of a single wish, it would surely be that not one of the little urchins, who now and in the years to come, will troop into our schools, in quiet village streets where rooks are cawing, and in black, misty towns where factories and furnaces are roaring—that not one of these little urchins should be called upon to shed a drop of his blood, or to spill the blood of his fellow man; that no occasion may arise for them to take up the stern duty which their elder brothers and fathers are now fulfilling with such matchless valour and fortitude. And indeed we have good reason to hope that the generation which will come under your Education Act, will have very small opportunity for the active practice of war.

But are we sure? In the vast complexity of human affairs, no matter what victory we may gain, is it certain that the war may not leave large and secret legacies of irreconcilable dissension amongst the nations? Who can say what may be the situation and the necessities of England in twenty years—that again it may not be one of extreme peril? It is to meet the exigencies and demands of 1940-1970 that you are educating our children to-day. After the war, all may look fair for a cloudless peace. But the thunder-clap so often bursts upon the nations from a clear sky. In any case, if England continues to hold a high and leading position, she will find herself largely responsible for looking after forty-six nations and communities. And if her voice is to have any authority, there must

be behind it the power to enforce her decisions. Having failed to insure our house, wouldn't it be well, now that it is almost burnt down, to insure our new house, even though there may be no present prospect of another big fire?

Therefore, even with the millennium dawning somewhere just behind the hills, I advance the quite monstrous proposal that all our boys should be thoroughly drilled, and taught the rudiments of soldiering—just enough to make it a fairly easy matter to fit them, if called upon, to take up arms quickly for the defence of their country. I urge that this be made a part of Popular Education. I am aware that I am asking for something ridiculous, outrageous, impossible. May the future prove it so!

I will say but one word as to the good results upon the health of the boys, and as to the value of the discipline, and the habit of prompt obedience which would follow such training. Everyone knows the worth of an old sailor or an old soldier when work has to be done, or trust has to be reposed. Discipline and prompt obedience are the saviours of the nation in times of war, as we are finding out. They are of sovereign value in times of peace—if we would but learn it. To obtain them, to make them instinctive and operative amongst all our boys, it would be worth while to make some sacrifice of what is called higher education.

With regard to our girls every one must gratefully acknowledge the splendid response that they have made to the national call upon them to take up new and difficult occupations. And it is probable that much of their alertness and varied ability may be placed to the credit of Popular Education. It is likely that the war will change in many ways the tastes and aims and out-

look of English girls, and will tend to develop new types. But until they can persuade Nature to release them from the primal curse of Eve, the very large majority of our girls must, for very safety and surety of the continuance of our race, accept the career of wifehood and motherhood. And with this career inevitably marked out for them, they should all be thoroughly taught, as early as possible, the very fine arts of cookery, needlework, household management, the care of children, and other domestic accomplishments, together with a rough general knowledge of medicine, and the elements of physiology. All "general" education should be postponed until these are thoroughly learned as the foundation of a girl's education.

Have not these necessary domestic accomplishments been more and more increasingly neglected during the years that Popular Education has been in force? Can you find in England to-day one girl who takes a delight in needlework, for fifty that could be found a few generations ago? Needlework is an art of the greatest use and also of the greatest ornament in the home. Many other indoor activities of kindred usefulness have been neglected, or altogether cast aside.

I do not say there have not been many compensations. But when, taking only two instances out of a hundred, we find that such primary, necessary, and universal occupations as household carpentry and needlework are in a state of neglect and decay, may we not be sure that there is something vicious in our system of Popular Education? Are we not confirmed in our suspicions that "general" education is often the enemy of that special and more important education which prepares and fits us to do our own individual work with all diligence, honesty, care, and thoroughness? And, with the

greatest respect, may I be allowed to enlarge your dictum on the matter, and make it read as follows:

“No country in the long run suffers an economic injury from an improvement in the general education of its population—provided that the thorough training of its members in their individual work, and in their duty to the State, is first made secure.”

I leave the matter to your careful and searching judgment.

CHAPTER II

(April—May 1918)

POPULAR EDUCATION AS IT REVEALS ITSELF IN OUR PLAY

The Higher Education of our masses at picture palaces and popular theatres—Its effect upon conduct and character—Gradual disappearance of Shakespeare from the British stage—Dull imbecility and licentiousness of our popular entertainments—Hideous exhibition by chorus girls—"Then you think I'm a whore"—Popular Education and the quality of our stage dialogue—Slang and its functions—The orgy at the beginning of the war—The bishops get fidgetty—Rosy Twaddle, Holy Twaddle, and Revue—Advice to bishops and clergymen as advertisers of plays—The wisdom of good tomfoolery—Actors and actresses, scullery maids, and dungcart emptiers—Children on our stage—Discouragement of Shakespeare by new Education Act—Virtual prohibition of five of his most popular plays—Our greatest actresses educated on and by the stage—Early training in their craft necessary to make good actors and carpenters—French middle classes sound and acute critics of plays—Children with a native talent for the stage—Child supernumeraries—Many of them better in the theatre than at home—Evils and abuses of the stage caused and multiplied by zealous ignorant bigots—Invitation to them to abstain from pecking and kicking at the theatre—Connection between Popular Education and present degradation of our stage—Elizabethan audiences—Their lack of Popular Education and consequent ability to understand and enjoy Shakespeare—Shakespeare's real home the English theatre—Appeal to Minister of Education to aid in getting him back there.

HAVING tested our present system of Popular Education by the quality of the workmanship it seems to produce, if not in all occupations, yet in some

of the most important, we may go on to apply to it another and even surer test. We may ask what kind of play and amusement does it encourage, or allow our multitudes to provide for themselves in their leisure hours?

There is no surer guide to the general level of education in a people, to their mental habits, tastes, and native capacities, their moral and intellectual fibre, than the form and quality of their popular amusements. Here, even more than in their daily work, they betray themselves. For their work is mainly forced upon them; their play they choose for themselves. You can nearly always sum up a man if you know what amuses him.

While you are preparing to give our masses increasing doses of "general" and "higher" education, they are already giving themselves the main part of their "higher" education at picture palaces, music halls, and theatres, from cheap fiction, and from the daily and weekly papers. I mean that part of their education which does really occupy and exercise their minds, which inflames their emotions, shapes their ideals, illumines and colours their views of life, and guides their daily conduct. Every one of us, according to his tastes, inclinations, or natural mental capacity, gives to himself, or wins for himself, nearly all the education that is operative upon his life and conduct. And this secondary education at films and music halls, and in sixpenny novels, which is the education our people give themselves, when they spend their own money instead of the nation's—this secondary education is far more operative upon conduct, and is of far more importance in moulding their characters than the greater

part of what you are teaching them in your schools. It is more operative and more stimulating because it instantly and strongly stirs their emotions, and engages their sympathies. It satisfies their natural tastes, and is therefore digested and assimilated without effort. It is far more vivid and real and alive to the great mass of our population, than the courses that you are giving them in your continuation classes.

It is obviously and necessarily on the level of their mental capacity. It is indeed the best and surest gauge of the level of their average mental capacity. And while much of the "higher" education that you are giving to our populace wanders out of the minds of most of them, or is tucked away as mere dead fact, this secondary education which they are giving themselves, and which they do really assimilate, builds up their permanent mental fabric, informs their character, and prompts their habits and conduct. And because this secondary education, which they provide at their own expense, is so potent and absorbing, so possessive of their thoughts—for this reason I am inclined to think that much of your secondary education is likely to be wasted upon the great mass of them. When they have been well prepared for their primary duty of doing thoroughly their own individual work in the world—work which in the coming generation must necessarily be strenuous and exhausting to their general powers of body and mind—have the overwhelming majority of them a surplus of time and mental energy to indulge very largely in both kinds of secondary education—the secondary education which you are forcing upon them, and the secondary education which you may be sure they will amply provide for themselves in the

form of amusement? It is this latter kind of secondary education which will have by far the greater influence upon their character and conduct.

To build up the character of its citizens to a high level, to train them in right conduct, is surely the supreme aim of Popular Education.

The point I wish to make is, that with this supreme aim in view, it is far more important for the welfare of the State, and far more beneficent to the masses themselves, to give a wise direction and wise encouragement to the secondary education which the people provide for themselves, than to enforce upon them all a secondary education which is largely foreign to their tastes, which in many cases draws off mental energies that could be better employed, which is often outside the possible sphere of their activities, and will be either quickly forgotten, or left to rust in them unused. Lest I should be mistaken, I repeat that I am most willing, nay, anxious, that opportunities for the highest education, and for winning the highest honours, should be given to every child—so far as this is consistent with the general welfare of the State. But I reaffirm the immense comparative importance of that secondary education which the people provide for themselves in the way of amusement, and as occupation for their leisure hours.

I will merely glance at the inordinate amount of time which in years past our populace wasted in looking upon, and betting upon, games at football. Years before the war this habit was scourged in memorable words by the manliest of English writers and poets, whose stern reproof was denounced at the time. But his whip was badly needed on the slouching shoulders that have since been pulled to "Attention" by the angry

arrest of war, and should never again be allowed to relax into sloth and lethargy.

It is, however, when we survey the evening amusements of the English people during the last ten or fifteen years, that we get a true measure of the apparent and transparent value of our present system of Popular Education.

May I impress upon your most serious attention, the startling fact that concurrently with the wider spread of Popular Education, Shakespeare has become more and more unpopular on the English stage; until now, for some seasons past, only occasional odd, scattered performances of his plays have been given in out-of-the-way places, for the most part by actors quite untrained in the delivery of verse. However laudable in itself it may be to give a few performances of Shakespeare in the Waterloo Road, it is in reality the bitterest comment on the general taste of London playgoers, and a glaring exposure of our national contempt for Shakespeare on the stage. When that is all we can offer, we merely publish and emphasize the poverty and insolvency of our Shakespearean drama. Our theatres both in London and the provinces have never been so crowded and so prosperous as since the outbreak of war. Yet since the earlier months, when a few productions of his war plays had short, unsuccessful runs, Shakespeare has been practically absent from our national stage.

He has been absent from the English stage. But he has not been absent from the German stage. In the year before the war there were sixty-six companies playing Shakespeare in Germany, and in Berlin eight theatres put up twenty-five different Shakespearean productions; while 1,104 representations were given of "The Merchant of Venice" alone. Our English

record for that year is too contemptible to set down. Our record since the war, compared with Germany's, would probably prove to be equally contemptible, equally shameful to us, and equally dishonouring to Shakespeare. May not Germany well fling at us the taunt that "if music hall and cinematograph England" had been possessed with the spirit of Shakespeare, we should long ago have won the war?

Shakespeare is banished from the English stage. As Popular Education has become universally operative, Shakespeare has gradually disappeared, and is now making an inglorious, unobserved, and possibly final exit.

Enter Popular Education. Exit Shakespeare from our theatres, unheeded and despised. That is an indictment of our present system of Popular Education, so severe in its implications, that no further evidence is necessary. It is conclusive in itself.

May I dwell, with some insistence, upon the fact that your new Education Bill is introduced at the very moment when the English populace, brought up under our present system, and taught and nourished thereby, has finally dismissed Shakespeare from being their chief popular educator and entertainer in his own legitimate class-room—the theatre? For three hundred years he has gloriously filled that post, and he is contemptuously dismissed as soon as Popular Education has had time to influence and inform the masses, and very pointedly, just as you bring in your new Education Bill.

Is this an unlucky coincidence? Not at all. It is what Goldsmith's bear-leader called a "concatenation accordingly." Fifty years ago, before the advent of Popular Education, our middle-class young men in London and the large towns, saw a great deal of

Shakespeare in the theatre, studied him there, understood him, were greatly amused by him, could quote him largely, and could intelligently compare the varied renderings of his great speeches by different actors. In those days, every large town in England could see six or eight, perhaps a dozen, plays of Shakespeare every season, together with Sheridan's comedies and other sterling stuff. Many of the parts were very badly performed, but there was always some good acting by actors who could speak blank verse, and knew that it had to be delivered in a different way from modern slipshod slang. In places like Manchester and Edinburgh quite remarkably good Shakespearean acting was frequently to be seen. The little city of Exeter, in one season of the seventies, saw more Shakespearean acting than London has seen for the last two years. Sprung from these old traditions, Henry Irving, before Popular Education had begun to guide the taste of the masses in the theatre, started his series of memorable Shakespearean revivals at the Lyceum, and carried them on in spite of the fact that under a regime of universal Popular Education, Shakespeare was gradually waning and dying. And now Popular Education has done its perfect work, and Shakespeare is dead in the only place where he will ever exercise a fruitful influence upon the English masses—the English theatre.

Shakespeare is dead in the English theatre, but he is still alive in the German theatre—even during the war, so far as one can learn.

Shakespeare is dead in the English theatre, and with him are dead our hopes of a living modern intellectual drama. For he was our leader and standard-bearer. He explored for us English character at its sources,

and held before us its best and truest and most enduring types; he gave us to translate into terms of modern life, stupendous displays of all the permanent passions and moods of humanity in great and full deploy; he taught us, not the cheap tricks of the playwright, but the sovereign art of the dramatist. We have lost our great model, and with him our craft has almost disappeared. We cannot hope for a worthy English national drama until Shakespeare is restored to his place, as its perpetual fount of inspiration, and source of intellectual and spiritual energy.

Shakespeare is dead in the English theatre. The average playgoer to-day has not enough knowledge of human nature to recognize the enduring truth of Shakespeare's characters; not enough humour to enjoy Shakespeare's rich comedy; not enough serious purpose in life to delight in Shakespeare's tragedy; not enough patience to listen to Shakespeare's speeches; not enough mental energy to understand them; not enough education to take pleasure in Shakespeare's poetry, and wit, and the beauty and wisdom of his dialogue. To the average playgoer to-day Shakespeare is largely incomprehensible—a bore, a nuisance, an affliction. And this after fifty years of Popular Education! The average playgoers of fifty years ago did take some pleasure in seeing Shakespeare, did to some extent understand him, had some considerable knowledge of him, and were not bored and baffled by him.

Shakespeare is dead in the English theatre. Who or what has taken his place?

If I had a mortal enmity against some man of good sense and sound education, who by good fortune knew nothing of our present English theatres and music halls, I would mercilessly sentence him to visit nightly the

entertainments that are taking place there. I would suppose him to have no knowledge of what he was going to see, and I would set him to watch the audience carefully, and to note what were the things that most interested and amused them, the things that moved them to raptures of applause. And I would then ask him what kind of Popular Education the masses of them must have received, and which had resulted in their setting up for themselves such standards of amusement.

I wish I could induce you, sir, in the interests of Popular Education, to visit our music halls and most popular theatres. Let me again affirm that it is here where our masses are getting the education that is most operative upon their daily life, and conduct, and character.

In one or two of our better theatres you would find an occasional play or sketch in which we can take pride, as being not merely empty amusement, false sentiment, crude sensation, or veiled sensuality. Amongst all our thousands of nightly entertainments, it would be strange if we could not show some glimmers of serious wit and wisdom. You would find much harmless fun and nonsense. So far, good; inasmuch as they ease overtaxed minds and bodies, and perhaps in some cases afford a welcome relief from your continuation classes. Provided fine and serious work is being done and seen in the theatre, I am wholly in favour of giving the masses large refreshing draughts of harmless fun and nonsense.

How wise is good tomfoolery, how healthful, how life-giving! But it must be *good* tomfoolery, that does really ease the mind, and does not drug and besot, and dull the faculties to the perception of what is of value and meaning in life.

I think, sir, that if you, in your office as Minister of Education, were to make constant visits to our theatres and music halls, you would find that the bulk, the staple, of the education which, in the absence of any wise government encouragement of this kind of higher education, the people are there providing for themselves, is mostly of a vulgar and banal sort, tending greatly to their intellectual and spiritual degradation.

There is very little outward indecency; though I have heard a blazing popular comedian deliver lines of ill-concealed filthiness, for which his hourly rate of pay was probably ten times as much as you receive for superintending the education of the kingdom. But unveiled indecency is very rare. There is very much less of it than there was fifty years ago. In the lower grades of entertainment there is undoubtedly a good deal of improvement. Our lowest kinds of entertainment have become more decorous, less frankly indecent, but probably more essentially vulgar and meaningless: on the whole, perhaps less amusing. The higher forms of drama, everything that could give mental exhilaration and intellectual enjoyment, everything that could tend to encourage a great and serious spirit in the nation, have been almost swept away from our stage. Though under stress, we are splendidly showing that this great and serious spirit is still dwelling in us.

The bulk and staple of our middle-class and lower middle-class entertainments are largely compact of dull mediocrity, banality, tawdry sentiment, rank sensation, horribly vulgar sensual suggestion, and sheer imbecility. Frank riotous indecency would, in many cases, be more tolerable, for it would at least have a savour

of vital human nature, even if a rank, disagreeable savour.

When the war had been in progress for long over two years, and we were in deadly grapple for our lives, I saw at a West End theatre a large troupe of chorus girls, all uniformed as men, in tightly-fitting coats, cut short with little flaps, so as to display the least attractive part of their bodies, and set off with other items of man's attire in garish colours; the whole costume being a pattern and model of vile, ugly, senseless, bad taste. The girls had been drilled to perform in unison a series of quite meaningless operations and evolutions, waving their arms, lifting their legs, placing their bodies in ridiculous ungraceful attitudes, and sometimes flaunting unconsciously that terribly conspicuous and least attractive part of their bodies which the costume seemed chiefly designed to "exploit." The hideous exhibition was accompanied by music that could only be described as appropriate to it. I had come into the theatre reading of horrible battle carnage in Flanders. My heart sank within me, and I hurried away from this more dreadful scene.

That sickening masquerade of idiocy and bad taste had cost some thousands of pounds to "produce." It is a not unfair sample of what has been a staple of English amusement at many of our popular, and at some of our most fashionable, theatres for many years past. Many millions of money have been wasted merely to degrade and hebetate the playgoing public, and to make them unfit to understand Shakespeare, and whatever might give them intellectual delight in drama. A dozen years before the war, I pointed out that the money so spent would have bought us an en-

tire fleet. It would have gone far towards raising that extra army corps or two, whereby Lord French might have saved Lille.

The Lord Chamberlain licenses the prodigal display of this and kindred idiocy, and until lately has forbidden Sophocles, Ibsen, Maeterlinck, and Brieux. The press, many of the leading London daily papers, almost invariably approve this style of entertainment, praise it lavishly in terms of sympathy and affection, rarely condemn even its most vicious excesses, and judge it by a standard that leaves no hope for any serious modern drama to spring up amongst us.

If I can persuade you, sir, as I hope I may (seeing how intimately this matter is connected with Popular Education)—if I can persuade you to visit our popular places of entertainment, I will ask you to take particular note of the style and quality of the dialogue that is spoken on our stage, not only in these pieces, but in those that have a dramatic form. It is to be always remembered that whatever success may be justly due to dresses, scenery, and other legitimate aids to our enjoyment in the theatre—it is to be remembered that it is only the actual dialogue that gives permanent worth and value to a play. By his dialogue alone a dramatist lives; by its vigour, precision, simplicity, brilliancy, or fitness to the character and the situation. Though, to obtain success in the theatre, the dramatist must have many other qualities and accomplishments.

What is the kind and quality of the average dialogue that is spoken on the English stage to-day? Here I hope you will allow that Popular Education is directly and crucially concerned. For surely if its effects are visible and measurable anywhere, it will be in our popular theatres, by watching what modes of talk,

what kind of dialogue are most relished by the audience; what they tolerate, what they endure, what they reject.

We have seen that they now utterly reject Shakespeare, though until lately they have allowed him to bore them mildly, when he has been smothered up in irrelevant scenery, gorgeous dresses, music, dances, and processions. To take a much lower level, English playgoers forty years ago delighted in the burlesques of Byron and Burnand, which had many amusing scenes of parody and often contained genuine wit. Their dialogue, if not of any great style or distinction, was far better English than is generally to be heard in our modern musical plays. We have a school of modern light comedy which is incomparably better than anything of its kind that was to be seen on the English stage forty years ago. Its dialogue has great charm, ease, naturalness. It generally lacks that underlying seriousness which is the mark of the greatest comedy. It avoids all but drawing-room topics and issues. Therefore it doesn't cut into our national life. Its vogue and influence are almost limited to London.

If we examine carefully the average dialogue that is spoken in our popular theatres, alike fashionable, middle class, and lower class, we shall find that most of it is slovenly, uncolloquial, and insincere. The vast proportion of it is very bad English. While, in the class of popular entertainment that has lately swamped our theatres to the exclusion of all serious work, the average conversation is often fitted to the mouths of a party of rowdy shopboys frolicking with disreputable minxes on a bank holiday.

I will give a sample. The following sentence was spoken in a fashionable West End theatre, in a piece

that had no connected story or discoverable plot; where none of the personages, so far as I could discern, acted from any intelligible motive, or had any reason for being in the places where they found themselves. There was a succession of bright tawdry scenes, a display of gorgeous dresses, a crowd of chorus girls, and several star performers of both sexes, who appeared in different disguises throughout this disordered maze and revel of insanity. The leading comedian was making advances to the leading lady.

"I suppose you mean to infer that I'm hot stuff," she replied.

I am fastidious in the matter of dialogue, and I claim that this line should have read, "Then you think I'm a whore."

That is good Shakespearean English, and it says what she meant in exactly half the number of syllables. It has also the merit of implying a reproof instead of a sanction for further impropriety.

The word I have used is a plain, coarse one, but it is not really so coarse or so filthy as the term actually used. Many plain, coarse things exist in the world, and plain, coarse words are necessary to denote them; unless we would deceive ourselves and corrupt our language. Integrity of speech is the sign of integrity of character. The right use of words means the right perception of facts. The right perception of facts gives a power of control over such of them as are amenable to our control. English people always think they have escaped from an ugly fact when they have merely escaped from an ugly word. Our present calamities and misfortunes can be directly traced to our inveterate habit of supposing ourselves to be in the

region of facts when we are merely in the region of words.

"I suppose you mean to infer that I'm hot stuff."

The words were spoken by a very accomplished and beautiful woman, a born high comedienne of a rare type, who in any healthy condition of our stage would be delighting educated audiences in such parts as Rosalind and Lady Teazle. And she was serving out to a thoughtless crowd a nauseous stew compounded of folly, inanity, vulgarity, and such disguised or undisguised impropriety as I have quoted. It is heart-breaking to think of the numbers of trained actors and actresses who are defrauding the drama of their most valuable art, and are being "exploited" to degrade the public taste, and to corrupt the English language. There is a wealth of potential talent which is being constantly drained off to this debasing service.

"I suppose you mean to infer that I'm hot stuff."

Sir, I claim that this is a fair sample of much of the dialogue that is nightly spoken in the majority of the theatres of our country, and this to the immense approval and enjoyment of crowded audiences. I do not say that there are not better things to be found, which if they do not tend to the purity and vigour of our mother tongue, at least do not corrupt it. But a popular English audience seems to laugh at anything except wit. The last time I saw "The School for Scandal" there was scarcely a laugh except at some interpolated gags. Yet one would think that Sheridan's dialogue had a perennial power of amusement, even for the least educated person. But Sheridan has vanished from our stage in company with Shakespeare.

"I suppose you mean to infer that I'm hot stuff."

That is a fair sample of the dialogue that most amuses an average popular audience. What kind and what level of Popular or General Education does it imply?

Surely it is one of the first concerns of Popular Education to teach our children the right use of our native tongue. The quality of the dialogue most approved and enjoyed by the vast audiences in our popular theatres, is a measure of the quality of the training they have received in English grammar, speech, and literature. It has always been a cherished duty of the French theatre to preserve the purity of the French language. And the good effect of this is shown in the diction and manners of the French lower and middle classes. The almost unanimous enjoyment by our vast theatre-going public of such sloppy, pert, and vicious dialogue as I have quoted is, I respectfully submit, sir, a grave reproach to that part of our system of Popular Education which is responsible for teaching them the English language. A man's vocabulary is the direct expression of the quality and the value of the education he has received. My old carpenter had a far stronger, nobler power of speech than the vast majority of the audiences in our popular theatres, brought up under Popular Education. His vocabulary was certainly very limited; but it was a clear, simple, racy vernacular, dealing habitually with realities.

I do not propose to banish slang from the drama. It will always be current in daily talk, and the theatre naturally and rightly adopts it in like measure. Slang is necessary to the growth of a language, and is always one of its feeders. A language without slang is a dead language. An abundance of curt, virile slang is a sign of rude, boisterous vitality in a language. That very

small part of the current slang of the day which is found to be serviceable, creeps into the language, as parvenus creep into good society, gains an acknowledged position, and becomes an approved mode of speech. The rest drops speedily into disuse. Slang is also useful for the correction of prigs, and for the annoyance of superior persons. But an abundance of meaningless, vicious slang is the sign of general stupidity, befuddlement, and mental depravity. The mere fact that some slang is spoken in our theatres is not in itself a sign of degradation in our drama. The evil is that a peculiarly noxious kind of slang has become the staple dialogue of our national form of entertainment, that it is almost universal, that it is spoken to the virtual exclusion of good sense and fine feeling, and to the wide corruption of our native tongue. This kind of slang is sometimes used in our fashionable comedies with the implied sympathy and approval of the author and audience. It is part of the business of comedy to correct bad habits of speech, by exposing them to ridicule. When vicious forms of slang are put into the mouths of characters designed to be sympathetic, they are made popular; the value of our ordinary coins of speech is lowered, and a defaced and debased verbal and mental currency is sent into wide circulation.

A man of sterling character, good sense, and sound mental fibre, even if of limited education, rarely uses and rarely enjoys slang. Slang is habitually used only by young folk, and by ignorant, foolish, empty persons of low intelligence. Therefore, except in the portrayal of quite young people, slang should never be used by the dramatist without some implied censure or ridicule, or at least a tolerant contempt of the character speaking.

The tendency in the theatre towards flabby, dis-

will have more or less open access. The Puritans tried to avoid this evil by doing away with theatres altogether, thereby calling into existence the festival of undisguised indecency on the Restoration stage. But the Restoration comedies are purged of much of their bad effect by the brilliancy of their wit, and the force of their portraiture of town life. I confess myself a great admirer of the wit and characterization of Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Colley Cibber. I do not think their comedies had nearly so much evil influence upon their audiences as many of our present entertainments have upon our modern audiences. When we are intent upon watching a well-drawn character, or listening to witty talk, we are drawn away from sensual suggestion.

The Puritans tried to close the theatres altogether. That is allowed to be impossible to-day. It is startling, though on second thoughts it is seen to be quite natural, to find that the silly, holy horror of the acted drama, which has always been one of our pet national whimsies, should lead to the establishment amongst us, as our national evening pastime, of the most frivolous, futile, and perhaps most morally degrading form of entertainment that has ever wasted and soiled the leisure of a civilized nation. The opposition that would meet any Government proposal to guide and inspire the Popular Education of the people in the theatre, is a chief reason that England, with her native aptitude for great and serious drama, with her record of past proud leadership in this civilizing and humanizing art, has to-day a national theatre so intellectually bankrupt and imbecile that its main productions are laughing-stocks to our enemies, and objects of bewilderment and contempt to our Allies.

The outbreak of the war seemed to provoke an orgy

of extravagant, incoherent, vicious gaiety in our popular theatres. The scenery became more garish and costly; larger troupes of chorus girls in scantier dresses paraded more and more of their physical charms; blazing popular comedians paraded less and less of their intellectual powers. One production was advertised to cost £15,000.

The London variety stage burst into a romp of flaming licentiousness. There were mutterings of disapproval. Somebody called out for the Lord Chamberlain. One manager defended himself by saying that he had the Lord Chamberlain's licence, without intending thereby to demonstrate the Lord Chamberlain's impotent acquiescence and official approval of this class of entertainment. Another manager defended himself by saying that his "show" was "clean," without giving any definition of the word, and without admitting that of two evils, it is much better to be dirty than imbecile.

The bishops got fidgetty. Clergymen occasionally look in at the theatre, sometimes to reprove its immorality; sometimes to beam on a piece of rosy twaddle; sometimes to advertise widely, the soul-saving qualities of some comic travesty of religion, such as "Have you found Jesus?" by Mr. Godly Slime.

The bishops got fidgetty. It was pointed out to them that though there might be flaming licentiousness at some theatres, there was a compensating amount of rosy twaddle at other theatres. Upon hearing this, the bishops seemed to be satisfied. They quieted down, and the subject dropped.

We are used to these periodic eruptions of outraged morality against the theatre. We never learn that flaming licentiousness and rosy twaddle are the inevitable counterparts of each other. We never learn that a sane,

sincere, intellectual drama is the enemy of them both, and the best security for a wholesome, invigorating atmosphere in the theatre.

"No!" we cry out. "Let all our plays be rosy twaddle! Let wax doll morality be decreed in all our theatres! Let our drama avoid all 'unpleasant' subjects! Let it not dare to tell us unwelcome truths about ourselves! Let it make no demand upon our serious thought, and no criticism upon our vices! Let it spurn the realities of life!"

Having thus delivered ourselves, we go to sleep until human nature revenges itself upon rosy twaddle, and makes another defiant exhibition of all its ugly nakedness.

The bishops may be sure that an enforcement of rosy twaddle will not banish licentiousness from our theatres. Rather, by the natural law of reaction, rosy twaddle is likely to encourage an outbreak of licentiousness. I do not wish to shut out rosy twaddle altogether from our stage. Wholesome rosy twaddle may be necessary for our growing girls, if they will go to theatres; as wholesome adventure and stirring heroism are certainly good for our growing boys. But rosy twaddle is not a good preparation for the realities of life, even for growing girls. And the present generation of them will have to live in a world of cruel and piercing realities, and not in a dreamland of rosy twaddle. It is a very difficult and thorny question. The onus lies upon individual fathers and mothers, and will always lie upon them.

If the bishops, by an occasional protest, or by their occasional patronage of rosy twaddle, could succeed in driving out immorality from the theatre, they would only drive the most of it to take shelter elsewhere—

some of it perhaps in churches. If the bishops really wish to raise our decadent and moribund drama, let them not try to enforce a universal reign of rosy twaddle, but let them give their help and countenance to establish the vogue of a national school of sincere and serious modern drama and comedy, whose first aim shall be to face the great realities of our national life and character, and to tell us the truth about them in a way that will amuse and interest thoughtful and educated people of all classes. Let clergymen bestow the very precious and welcome pecuniary aid of pious advertisement and benediction upon plays of this class, and not upon rosy twaddle stuffed with cheap false sentiment, or upon holy twaddle of the "Have-you-found-Jesus" type. The theatre is not the place to save men's souls. It is the place to give us thoughtful amusement, to instil a large and sane knowledge of life, to educate us insensibly in the supreme science of wise living. Surely, sir, this latter is the most necessary and most important part of "general" education. The theatre at its best is the most potent instrument of "general" education. And the people will give it to themselves, if only they can be rightly trained and led.

When Popular Education was introduced fifty years ago, it might have been confidently prophesied, "This will indirectly lead to a wide knowledge and appreciation of Shakespeare in his native home, the theatre. This will train our populace to recognize and demand the best the drama can give them." Alas! As Popular Education became more popular, Shakespeare became more unpopular, until we have finally kicked him off our stage. When we set out for battle, instead of calling upon Shakespeare to fortify us with his patriotism, to inflame us with his passion for England, to counsel

us from his stores of radiant wisdom, and to amuse us with his rich, hearty humour—instead of this, we called for an obscene imp to tickle us with idiot quips, and becks, and leers, and smirks, and to jig with us to immeasurable jeopardy and sorrow and disaster. Instead of listening to the arousing music and thrilling trumpets of Shakespeare's verse, we listened to a crazy jingle of ragtime ditties and dances. Instead of applauding the noble, vigorous speech of Shakespeare, we applauded the fetid drivel of revue.

Has this nothing to do with the Popular Education our nation has received, and is receiving? Does it not point to something wrong in its conception, or in its matter, or in its standards, or in its methods, or in its instruments, or in its recipients?

I affirm that there is the most intimate connexion between Popular Education and the present intellectual degradation of nine-tenths of our popular amusements. England, as I write, hangs insecurely over a gulf of irretrievable ruin, not, indeed, because we have rejected Shakespeare from our theatres, but because in other and greater matters we have also rejected high standards; because as in the drama, so in matters of national life or death, we have fobbed ourselves with words, and stuffed our heads with trash, and our souls with insincerities. Our hope now is in the valour and tenacity of our soldiers. How like a granite fortress they stand, invulnerable. How splendid they are in battle. That is because in battle they have to be led, and they have to obey. Then the greatness of their strength appears.

No one would grudge the brave fellows who have been hourly risking their lives for us, whatever merri-ment and frolic may serve to relax them and refit them for their further dreadful struggle. The fierce excite-

ment of the times explains, and perhaps excuses, a good deal of frivolity and licentiousness. Physicians hold the key to that. It is perhaps inevitable. But it is none the less to be discouraged and deplored.

I have proclaimed myself a great lover of good tomfoolery. But the tomfoolery seen and heard in English theatres of recent years, has been for the most part such bad, dull, witless, and, in some cases, such evil tomfoolery. There has, of course, been a considerable mixture of clever and amusing stuff, and occasionally a rare gem of parody, or of grotesque buffoonery. When nearly all the popular theatres in a nation are given up to tomfoolery, we may surely look for an occasional relief from the monotony of tawdry, vulgar, jiggetty nonsense. But how comparatively rare it has been! Surely any ordinary sensible man, aware of the value of life and the seriousness of the times, who has visited our most popular entertainments of late years, must have agreed with the Preacher of old, "I said of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what doeth it? It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than the song of fools. As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools. Madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead."

It has been claimed that these entertainments refresh and exhilarate our soldiers on leave from the front. I passionately deny that the greater part of the tomfoolery at our popular theatres can refresh or exhilarate anybody with a mind much above that of a chimpanzee, or with tastes and habits of thought much above those of a Whitechapel roysterer on Margate pier. Good tomfoolery refreshes and exhilarates only a healthy vigorous mind, and this only after it has tired itself in strenuous exercise. Witless, sniggering, bla-

tant tomfoolery may give a kind of tipsy refreshment and exhilaration to those whose habit or "general" education makes them crave for it, as Eccles craved for cool, refreshing gin. But that only shows what ingrained tomfools they are. To pour the latest vulgar slang and nonsense into minds already soaked with it, is an occupation not worthy of our many fine and accomplished actors and actresses who are nightly engaged in it, but worthy only of a scullery maid pouring greasy dish-water down a sink, or of a farm labourer unloading a dung-cart on to a manure heap. I wrong the scullery maid and the farm labourer. *They* are doing clean and useful work.

I passionately deny that stupid and vulgar tomfoolery can have any other effect than to befuddle and hebete the mind, to deaden its perception of what is excellent, and to slacken the ardours and resolves of duty and patriotism.

I think I hear a mocking laugh from our grim enemy, as he squats there with his eyes and guns cocked towards Calais, jeering at "music hall" England, and hugging himself to think that "if we had possessed the spirit of Shakespeare we should long ago have won the war." But he shall find that the spirit of Shakespeare is again stirring in us, and in those thrice-armed breasts that are beating back the flood of German savagery in Flanders.

Let us suppose that on the outbreak of the war, the Government, from some reason of economy, or from some necessity of State, had put in force the Defence of the Realm Act, and had decreed that for a year no English theatre should play anything but Shakespeare, and this with scenery already painted. I do not say that such a measure was possible, or even advisable. But

if, from national necessity, it had been passed and enforced, does anyone doubt that it would have corrected and enormously raised the tastes of our theatre-goers, that it would have given them a new high standard of drama and comedy, that it would have developed in many of them a love for what is best in our literature, enlarged their views of life, quickened their patriotism, and made them more fit to perform their duties to their country? Does anyone doubt that it would have given us a higher standard of acting, and discovered actors with a special gift for interpreting our national drama? Does anyone doubt that such a measure would have promoted a wise sparing of time and money? That it would have saved all those hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of pounds that were spent for the most part in wasteful extravagance on scenery and dresses that are now on the dust-heap and in the rag-bag? That it would have saved many of the millions of pounds that were paid to look at tawdry spectacles? That it would have saved all those yet more precious golden hours that were spent in listening to rag-time jingles and choice bad English? That it would have filled our leisure hours with wise, fruitful amusement that we need not be ashamed to recall?

Does anyone say that it would have been a great hardship to deprive the mass of theatre-goers of their pleasure? Pleasure to listen to such dialogue as "I suppose you mean to infer that I'm hot stuff"! Hardship to listen to Shakespeare's chanted passion and philosophy and rich, wise humour! O bathos of Popular Education! O bottomless pit!

Does anyone say that the theatres would have been empty? Probably at first many of them would have been. Fit audiences Shakespeare might have found,

but very few. But in fault of getting something on the level of their vitiated tastes, theatre-goers would have grown to tolerate Shakespeare, they would have braced their wits to understand him, and in the end a large body of them would have found themselves amused and interested in listening to him, and in watching his vast panorama of human life unfold itself. Many of them would have got into a Shakespeare habit, as for years past they have got into a music-hall and variety theatre habit. For our national worship of music-hall nonsense and vulgarity is largely a habit, a fashion. We follow it for the same reason that we do many other stupid things—because other people do them. And we keep on doing it for the same reason. The habit, the fashion came in with the foolish years of heedless luxury before the war; it was one of our many reckless invocations to national calamity.

But those ignoble years of national slackness and fatty degeneration have passed. We are finding that hardship is our best schoolmaster, and necessity our best counsellor. These it is that prove our mettle, and heighten our courage, and arm our souls. After the war we shall have many hardships to endure. Let us brace ourselves to endure even the supreme hardship of listening to a little Shakespeare in our theatres. We may not like it at first; it will be a severe call upon such mental powers as we possess. But when he has schooled us for a time, and as our intelligence in the theatre begins to waken, we shall find there is an increasing wealth of wise amusement to be obtained from him, and the noisome folly and inanity of the years that have gone will stink in our memory.

It has lately been brought to your notice that our present Education Acts, by the clauses that restrict the

employment of children in theatres, really disallow the performance of at least five of Shakespeare's most popular and most enjoyable plays—"Macbeth," "King John," "The Winter's Tale," "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and "The Midsummer Night's Dream." "The Tempest" is also practically prohibited. Many modern plays of very high reputation are also excluded from our stage. And many more that might be written are stayed from seeing the light. We may say that our Education Acts forbid the performance, and the writing of all plays that have parts of an age less than fourteen. For these parts require attendance at rehearsal, and though rehearsals are pleasurable rather than fatiguing to the child, they take up some considerable time. And if the child has to play in one piece and rehearse in another, it is obvious that the time for school and play must be reduced.

We are all agreed that our first concern should be the health and welfare of the children. Let that be clearly understood. Now the theatrical life is a very healthy one. The work in itself is not exacting, and is full of pleasant and not injurious excitement. It is done in the company of one's fellows, and before encouraging spectators; and this in itself is exhilarating, and drives away nervous fancies and morbid thoughts. An actor, if he exercises ordinary self-control, has more than an average expectation of good health and long life. Here we may mention such names as Mrs. Siddons, Helen Faucit, Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendal, and Lady Bancroft, and, above all, Sarah Bernhardt, who, at an unmentionable age, has lately been delighting large audiences in two continents with eight or ten performances a week of the most exhausting leading rôles. All the famous English actresses I have named were born on the stage,

and educated largely by the stage. At the age when our Education Acts begin grudgingly and obstructively to allow our young people to make their first appearance, nearly all the most honoured actresses of the English theatre had played more parts than our present leading ladies will play in their lifetime. It may be claimed that, so far from being detrimental to health and long life, a theatrical career tends to promote them. In the matter of morality, at all the leading popular theatres, neither at rehearsal nor at performance, is there any evident violation of decency or morality that a child would notice. At some of the less reputable houses there may be lax behaviour and occasional breaches of decorum, but not more glaring than would be forced on a child's attention at the street corners of the same neighbourhood. The necessarily constant work and driving bustle of every stage, and especially the variety stage, tend to shut out the opportunity of any such openly indecent and immoral behaviour as would be likely to contaminate a child. Observant children would be more likely to see indications of such behaviour in the auditorium, and on the whole would be more protected from it if they were behind the scenes. It may be urged that, according to my own showing, much of the dialogue in popular variety pieces is unfit for children's ears. I agree most cordially. I would certainly protect children from hearing it. I would equally protect the older performers from speaking it. I would also protect the entire audiences from listening to it, if that were possible.

If, sir, in place of forbidding children under the age of fourteen to speak Shakespeare on our stage, you could decree that no person under the age of eighty should listen to much of the dialogue that is current

there, you would be rendering a great service to national education, for you would be helping to check the nightly corruption of the English language. You would also be indirectly rendering a great service to our decrepit modern drama, which under our present regime is threatened with extinction. May I again point out that although nonsense and frivolity, tinged with more or less veiled indecency, have always obtained some footing on every stage, it was not until Popular Education asserted its sway and force, that these undesirable elements of entertainment obtained a national vogue; became the national dialect of the English stage; became our national way of expressing ourselves in the theatre; our national pride and delight; our national model of popular talk; for whose delivery at our most popular theatres, we are ready to pay their most successful exponents at the rate of about £50 an hour?

Since, then, Popular Education does not correct the present general delight in vulgarity and inanity on what must now be called our national stage; since, on the contrary, it seems to flourish and spread under Popular Education, may we not say that the children of the theatre fifty years ago were receiving behind the scenes an education that, in this important matter, was better and sounder than the education our average children are receiving to-day? For they had constantly to listen to a fine rendering of Shakespeare's noblest passages, and often to recite them. At any rate we may claim that there cannot be anything very wrong in permitting children to receive a training akin to that which fitted Mrs. Siddons, Helen Faucit, Ellen Terry, Mrs. Kendal, and Lady Bancroft for their honoured careers.

It has been shown that our Education Acts entirely

forbid the performance of five or six of Shakespeare's best and most popular plays. In reality they tend to ban the performance of Shakespeare altogether. Shakespeare's leading parts, if they are to be played so as to give anything approaching a full measure of enjoyment to the audience, demand not only great natural powers in the actors, but they demand also an early training of these powers, and a constant exercise of them. We are here again forcibly reminded that the first rule of Popular Education should be to teach our young people, or to give them an opportunity of learning, those things that will fit them for their individual calling, and make them masters of it. All "general" education, except of the most elementary kind, should be deferred until these things are thoroughly learned. It was because their childhood was spent in acting that such actresses as Mrs. Siddons, Helen Faucit, and Ellen Terry could play Shakespeare's leading parts with such convincing power and passion and charm, and that Mrs. Kendal and Lady Bancroft could play modern parts with such ripeness, ease, and round, rich perfection. What a body and quality there was in the old acting, as of well-seasoned oak, or old vintage wine! It was because my old carpenter had thoroughly learned his trade as a boy that he could make the whole of a large, useful, durable cabinet with his own hands. (The door of the next room is interjecting noisy, irritating comments on our modern school of carpentry, by slipping its latch and intermittently creaking and slamming. It may be alleged that this is due to the wind. I maintain that it is due to the bad education of our carpenters.) There is exactly the same difference between our old Shakespearean actors and our modern amateurs, that there is between my old carpenter and our modern carpen-

ters educated under our recent acts. And the reason for that difference is exactly the same, namely, that our old actors and carpenters had received a sound and thorough education in their respective callings at an age when they were most receptive and most pliable. I could give you instances of the same lapse in dozens of other trades and callings.

Our modern actors do well enough in modern comedy where nothing much more is required of them than to do and say those things on the stage which they do and say in a drawing-room. But actors trained by modern methods, which leave them practically amateurs, cannot play Shakespeare—witness some recent attempts which have ended in comic disaster. Shakespeare needs, even for a moderately successful interpretation, an early, long, strenuous training in acting, in speaking verse, and in appropriate stage bearing and manners.

I do not say that these cannot be learned after the age of fourteen, but I do not think the ground-work of it is ever quite so well laid as in childhood. At any rate, if our Government is determined to rob the English theatre of its means of getting a supply of Shakespearean actors, and in this way immensely to lower the level of our drama, and thus encourage a vicious form of evening Popular Education throughout the land—if Government thus decides, then I think we are justified in asking it to establish a Conservatoire for training our young actors on the French model. This, if wisely ordered, would do something to remedy the present defects and evils of our theatre. The cost would be comparatively little, the ultimate gain to Popular Education would be immense. For I suppose no one, who is competent to judge, will question that the French system of training actors has immensely raised the level

of French acting, and has concurrently raised the intellectual level of the French drama. This, in its turn, has quickened the intelligence and the critical judgment of French playgoers. The middle classes in the second circle of the Théâtre Français are far better judges of a play than are the occupants of our London stalls. You will hear from middle-class French playgoers the most sound and acute dramatic criticism. In England, and especially of late years, there has been practically no critical judgment of the drama amongst our mass of theatre-goers. There has been a mere guzzle of popular amusement. How do you account for it, sir, that under a system of universal Popular Education, its recipients scarcely trouble to judge what they spend their spare cash and best leisure to procure? They merely swallow it.

Is it too much to ask that Government will recognize how valuable an instrument the drama might be in raising the tone of Popular Education, and give us a Conservatoire, as an approach to a soundly-organized and well-managed National Theatre, when the time and the circumstances shall be favourable to its establishment? Again I affirm that the clauses in our Education Acts which forbid the employment of children under fourteen, tend both directly and indirectly to shut out Shakespeare and the better forms of modern drama, and thus throw wide open the stage doors of our theatres to mediocrity, scatterbrain frivolity, and romping imbecility.

What I have said applies chiefly to the exclusion of children from our stage so far as this affects a sound training for their future career. This is distinct from the more important question of forbidding them to appear in parts that demand to be played by children of

ages from four up to fourteen. This is a most serious handicap for the modern drama, to say nothing of the five or six excluded plays of Shakespeare. There are many stories of the stage that insist that a child or children shall be actually seen and heard. They would lose their poignancy and meaning, and the play would be pointless or impossible, without the presence of the child, and the drift or force of its spoken words. Many of our best and most deservedly popular modern plays, numbered by dozens, have children's scenes which are of the first importance in the scheme; though they are in most instances quite short, call for no great intelligence, and put no strain upon the little actor or actress. Numerous instances will occur to everybody who knows the repertory of the modern English stage.

In considering this question let us put first the welfare of the child. So far as modern drama of the higher class is concerned, these children's parts are comparatively few in number—that is, when we count them in the entire volume of modern stage characters. The child is pleasantly engaged, is generally petted and *fêted* in the theatre, and is not called upon for any great physical or mental exertion. No stage child of to-day has to work a quarter so hard as the great actresses whom I have named, worked from their earliest years. I suppose their life, from the time they could take part in a general cast, was one of constant rehearsals by day and acting till a late hour every night. Judging by results, will anyone tell me how these great actresses have suffered from being allowed to go upon the stage from their earliest days? Certainly they have not suffered in health. I have already touched upon their “general” education.

Under the former laws that governed this matter, the

children in our modern serious plays were selected from a crowd of applicants, who were individually tested before being chosen for the part. Anyone who has constantly to rehearse children for the stage, occasionally picks up some little imp or gamine who has a born genius for acting, and is most likely fit for nothing much else. Such a child will probably be the despair of your teachers, and will make mockery of your Education Acts. His vocation is stamped all over him, though he may not have reached half the years of your age limits. When you find a child in your schools of extraordinary or special mental ability, you give that child every opportunity to develop his natural gift to the utmost. When a child is found with a natural gift for the great art of acting, quite as rare and precious a possession as marked mental ability, quite as deserving of encouragement and fostering care, often more fruitful in delight for the public—why, when such a child is discovered, should his special abilities be thwarted, and his fructifying talent laid up in the napkin of “general” education? If it is said that he will be made a more useful citizen by being kept off the stage, I very much doubt it. The only sure result, so far as I can see, is that the child will be kept out of the only place where his special ability will be allowed a free course to develop. Let us take care that in our zeal to manufacture citizens all of one particular pattern of approved dullness and banality, we do not bar the door to originality, variety, genius, and leadership.

I may point out here that our present Education laws would probably have robbed the English theatre of Edmund Kean, the greatest Shakespearean actor with this kind of temperament that our stage has known. At any rate, it would have deprived him of his early training.

How valuable that early training was, is shown by the fact that even with the advantage of it, he yet spent his early manhood in constant failure in parts like Othello, Richard, and Shylock, and only obtained his mastery over them by long and continued practice. Here, again, it is made plain that if we are to get good and fine workmanship in any skilled craft, such as acting and carpentry, the first aim of our educational policy must be to see that every workman has a thorough training in it at an early age, even if his "general" education is a little neglected or deferred. How all occasions do conspire to force this truth upon us!

If we are again to have a living Shakespeare upon our stage, as the model and inspirer of a living serious modern English drama, we must see to it that ample opportunities are given for our actors to have a thorough training, and to train themselves in the infinitely difficult, exacting, and arduous art of acting. Our school of modern comedy needs comparatively little training. It largely consists in photographing the manners and behaviour, and speaking the slipshod English of the drawing-room. It can best be learned in a drawing-room. Our modern "national" drama, I mean the variety entertainment, needs comparatively little training. It largely consists in photographing the manners and behaviour, and speaking the latest slang, of the race-course, the football field, and the public-house. It can best be learned in a public-house, or on a race-course.

But when an actor is given words to deliver that convey great human passion or emotion, and that implicitly assert the value and meaning of life, another kind of training is needed. The prose of high comedy, as well as the lofty verse of Shakespeare, needs a long cultiva-

tion and practice of delivery, if it is to reach the intelligence of the hearer, and not to bore him with words that he cannot understand, or perhaps even hear.

I respectfully submit to you, sir, that the prohibition of children from the stage tends indirectly, as I have shown, to lower the level of our drama, and to confirm the masses of theatre-goers in their natural taste for what is cheap, frivolous, and debasing. And the general result of this and other conditions is that for many past years, during all the fateful time before and after the war, the English theatre, in place of being the wise counsellor and amusing companion of the nation, has rather been its empty, witless, and lascivious jester, and is at the present moment the most barren and contemptible theatre that any civilized nation has had for centuries. Yet our theatres were never so popular and prosperous as they have lately been.

Returning to the matter of these children who show a very marked talent for the stage, I beg you, sir, both in the interests of the children themselves and of the drama, to permit them, with due safeguards, to appear on the stage at any age at which suitable parts require their presence. There will be comparatively very few of them, not one, perhaps, in a hundred thousand of the child population of the nation.

As a matter of numbers, they are negligible. As a matter of principle, I claim that it is unwise and unjust to forbid them to exercise their natural gifts to their own advantage, to the delight of the public, and to the furthering of the best interests of the drama. But all children admitted to this class, and allowed to perform speaking parts of some importance, should be examined by a small committee of experts, and a certificate of competence given. I daresay the Academy of Dramatic

Art, assisted by Miss Italia Conti, would undertake this necessary function, and thus guard against any abuse of the privilege.

The rest of the children, who are required in some numbers for the due performance of pantomime and other spectacle or poetic plays, and for certain charming children's plays whose disappearance would be a great loss to the theatre, and would deprive the public of much pure and innocent enjoyment—these children should also be allowed to appear on our stage, under careful safeguards and restrictions. No special ability, or aptitude for acting is demanded from the children thus employed. All that most of them are called upon to do, is to dance and skip about the stage. It may be noted that "The Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor" are among the plays that require a number of such children for their performance. More than the children with a special talent for acting, these children are perhaps likely to be immediately benefited by the permission to appear on the stage. For many of them, their surroundings and company in the theatre are better and more wholesome than are their surroundings and company in their homes, or in the alleys where they spend their play time. They mostly come from the poorest classes, and they daily see and hear things much more harmful than they are likely to see and hear behind the scenes. They are generally most in demand about Christmas time, and the winter hours they spend in the theatres are a luxury of warmth and cheerfulness for them compared with the hours they spend in their homes and the streets. I do not think that anyone who has been behind the scenes at Drury Lane in the pantomime season, can doubt that the children there employed are on the whole substan-

tially benefited by being allowed to appear on the stage. Every arrangement is made for their comfort and well-being, and for their meals and education between whiles.

Of course, great care needs to be taken in framing the safeguards and the restrictions placed on the children's appearance. But that they should be utterly debarred from appearing in public is, I claim, hurtful on the whole to their interests and welfare, as it is needlessly vexatious to the public. It is urged that drunken, lazy, and unscrupulous parents often prey upon the earnings of their children. Surely the longer hours children are kept out of the company of such parents, the better for them. The child's earnings can be protected from the parents where this is advisable, or perhaps in all cases, by enacting that where the salary is in excess of daily keep and a little pocket-money, it shall be invested in savings banks or war bonds for the after benefit of the child. This would in most cases be a lesson in thrift to the children, for they would soon take a pride in adding to their store. The business might be managed by a committee composed chiefly of those whose blind hatred of the theatre has led to the present degraded condition of our stage. If, instead of indulging their whimsy of holy hatred of the theatre, they would frankly recognize the main facts, we might move towards a better state of things, both behind and in front of the curtain. The dominant facts of the situation are these:

(1) The theatre, including music halls and variety houses, is sure to grow in popularity and in influence.

(2) It is impossible to check and diminish that popularity and influence by pecking and kicking at theatres with constant, meddling, vexatious interferences.

(3) There will always be abuses and evils connected with the theatre, especially in those houses that give an entertainment deliberately intended to appeal to foolish, frivolous, and sensual tastes.

(4) These abuses and evils are aggravated and increased by the absence from our theatres of thoughtful people in search of sensible amusement, and by our neglect of serious comedy and drama, thus giving free scope for these houses to flourish and multiply in boundless prosperity.

(5) The abuses and evils inseparably connected with theatres, and more especially with those of a certain class, are to be corrected, or very largely diminished, by the attendance of thoughtful people in search of sensible amusement, by their demand for a better, less dissolute, and less imbecile form of national entertainment; and, chiefly, when the time and conditions shall be favourable, by the Government aid and countenance of a serious, national drama in a national theatre. Surely it will some day be apparent that the great mass of our people cannot be allowed to go on educating themselves during all their leisure hours in outrageous tomfoolery bordering on licentiousness and idiocy.

I commend these facts and considerations to the earnest attention of that small, stubborn sect of earnest people who, by their earnest wrong-headedness and zealous ignorance, are helping to multiply those very abuses and evils in the theatre which they are trying to abolish. Let them desist from pecking and kicking at the theatre. They cannot abolish it. They cannot shake its growing popularity. They may do something to make it less of a national disgrace and reproach. I suggest that, to begin with, these earnest people should busy themselves with the interests of the children of the

theatre, with their protection from unscrupulous parents, and with the careful audit and investment of their little savings.

I am assuming, sir, that you will favourably consider the facts and arguments I have brought before you, and that you will modify the clause in your bill that forbids the employment of the children in the theatre, so far as to allow their appearance under careful safeguards. I have dwelt upon this matter at great length, because I wished to place you in possession of all the facts relating to this very complicated question. It cannot be fairly viewed from the outside, or without a knowledge of all its bearings. Moreover, I am afraid that of all the many and far more important matters that I am trying to bring to your reluctant attention in this letter, this question is the only one that stands even a fractional chance of gaining your serious consideration, or of changing your policy. I appeal to you, sir, to allow children to take their place in what I hope will eventually be a worthy and operative English theatre, with a great and real, though silent, unobtrusive, indirect, educational influence for good on the mass of the English people. I ask this because it tends on the whole to promote the welfare of the children themselves; while it also, most assuredly, tends to bring about a revival of Shakespeare and of serious modern drama. I leave the matter to your grave and careful judgment.

Upon the general matter, I think I may claim to have made out a case for further inquiry into the connexion between Popular Education and Popular Amusement. How is it that concurrently with the spread of Popular Education our national taste in the theatre has sunk to a level of mere banality, vulgarity, and buffoonery, to the general exclusion of all serious

thought and wise enjoyment? Why is it that even refined and cultivated men and women have become largely infected with the popular taste, and shut off their intelligence when they enter a theatre? Does not the condition of the English theatre for the last fifteen years or more, indicate the same general carelessness of mental habit, and inability to think clearly and seriously about anything, which have brought upon us our present grave, national perils and disasters? May not Government wisely concern itself with the universal prevalence of a symptom which manifestly points either to some radical defect in our present system of Popular Education, or to a growing derangement and decadence of national thought and feeling which a sane and healthy Popular Education *in* the theatre might do something to correct?

Again I contend that in no place can you more surely get an authentic revelation of the mental capacity, tastes, and habits of the people than in their popular theatres. You catch them there in mental and spiritual dishabille. The English stage has lately been a hideous exposure of our unsightly mental and spiritual nakedness.

I ask you, sir, to dwell for a moment on the comparative levels of Popular Education in the time of Elizabeth and in our present time, as measured by the popular entertainments in their respective theatres. There was plenty of brutal, obscene amusement in the days of Elizabeth. Doubtless there were displays which would have shocked the ears and eyes of many of the frequenters of our present popular theatres, though I question if those coarser entertainments of a coarser and more robust age, were so charged with insidious corruption and mental depravity as some of our present-day enter-

tainments. But alongside those brutal exhibitions, there flourished the greatest drama of all times.

One might put up with a large amount of tawdry, extravagant display and witless vulgarity—treating it as mere holiday exuberance—if alongside it we had a vigorous, sane, modern drama that addressed itself to intelligent audiences. But the music-hall has usurped and devastated nearly all the evening leisure of our masses. It is our national school of taste and manners, and it clearly indicates the level and the drift of our Popular Education.

Consider, sir, what is implied in the fact that the groundlings in Shakespeare's day, huddled and noisy and uncomfortable, could understand and follow with delight the lofty diction of his noblest passages, with their swelling torrents of passion and emotion; his rich native humour; his pride of patriotism; his deep researches into the human heart; his massive portraiture of permanent types of character; his bright wisdom and philosophy of life. To the average playgoer in the pit to-day, these things are tiresome and dreary, and for the most part even meaningless and unintelligible. If Shakespeare went out of his way to express his contempt for the groundlings of his time, how would he tax and exhaust his vocabulary of scorn to castigate our groundlings of to-day. It may be said that the populace of his time went to Shakespeare's and kindred plays because there was nothing much else to go to. This seems to show the advisability of declaring a close time in English theatres, when none but Shakespeare's plays would be allowed performance, as I have already suggested. My old carpenter spoke good English because he habitually read the Bible and the "Pilgrim's Progress," and very little else came in his way. At any rate,

a very large number amongst Shakespeare's audiences must have enjoyed, and must have understood his plays, or they would not have been popular. You cannot drag people to see plays that do not amuse and interest them. How is it, sir, that the common people in Shakespeare's day had received an education that fitted them to enjoy and appreciate him as *popular entertainment*, while Popular Education to-day seems to fit them to enjoy little but stewed and clotted vulgarity and nonsense, and scarcely anything that demands from them a moment of serious thought or energy of attention?

It is gratifying to learn that you have lately decreed that there shall be an annual Shakespeare day in all our schools. We may hope that this will lead to such a study and knowledge of his plays as will prepare our children to become frequent visitors to him in his natural home—the theatre. We should not allow Shakespeare to become merely the parchment hobby of text correctors, and the convenient peg for scholars to hang a reputation upon. We should not even allow him to remain merely our dearest and most cherished library friend. Shakespeare should be our chief inspirer in the theatre; our enthralling showman of the deep mysteries of human life; our guide through its dark circles, as Virgil was to Dante; at one moment snatching us to the brink of shuddering precipices, and holding us breathless over roaring gulfs and torrents of passion and madness and despair; and at another roystering and carousing with us in a jolly tavern; sometimes, with all his banners flying, and all his drums beating, and all his trumpets blowing, marching with us to immortal fields of glorious battles in France; and again merrymaking with us at a village sheep-shearing, or chatting and jesting with us under the shades of Arden. He should be

our easy, adaptable friend, fitting himself to all our moods; our stern counsellor; our grave adviser; our boon companion; our laughing philosopher—all these should Shakespeare be to us in his natural home, the English theatre. All these Shakespeare has been to English playgoers in the past, and might again become. But we have kicked him out of his own royal domain, and in his place we have enthroned—what?

For dost thou know, oh Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself, and now reigns here
A very very—Pajock.

'Ah, sir, do but see what our popular theatres have become under the ravages of Popular Education! May I again respectfully urge upon you that the matter, in its serious implications, is one that calls for some searching inquiry from the Minister of Education?

If you reply that this matter is one that falls within the province of the Home Office, I am aware that in its larger developments it remains to be dealt with by that department. And when the times are less troubled and anxious, I hope the Home Office may be brought to see the wisdom, nay the national necessity, of considering it. At present, with other weightier concerns, it must be left in abeyance. But meantime, may not the Minister of Education be invited to lend a hand in sweeping away some of the worst abuses of the English Theatre, and in making it less of a national reproach and disgrace?

I maintain that merely as an instrument of "general" education, Shakespeare is the greatest, wisest, and by far the cheapest schoolmaster you can appoint. For with some small and constant encouragement and outlay—a mere drop in the bucket of your annual expendi-

ture—the people, if rightly led, will themselves pay for his teaching with the money they are now wasting upon the foolish and often noisome trash that they call “amusement.” Will you not assist, sir, in making Shakespeare popular in the only sphere where he will ever command a wide and compulsive influence upon the tastes, habits of thought, characters, and daily conduct of the populace—the theatres of his native land?

Feeling convinced of the great importance of this matter, and having an inside knowledge of it, I have tried to explore it thoroughly, and to put it before you in all its bearings, so that you may see how intimately it is woven with Popular Education in the web of our national life. Again, I leave it to your careful and deliberate judgment.

CHAPTER III

(May—June 1918)

POPULAR EDUCATION AND POLITICS BEFORE THE WAR

Political Dogma and Religious Dogma—Impossibility of Drawing up indisputable codes for children—General Education a very devious compass—The question of transcendent importance from 1890 onwards—Popular Education opposed to teaching future citizens their chief duty—Consequent immeasurable cost to the nation—Lack of vision and guidance—The unreturning wheel of fate—Germans teach us what Popular Education failed to teach us—Blindness of our politicians due to Popular Education—The housemaid's excuse, "It shan't happen again"—Where lay the fault?—Intellectual dishonesty the worst of mental ailments—Endemic at Westminster—Boy scouts movement more beneficial than school teaching—Intractibility of "young persons"—Cicero and Euclid the safest companions for them—Economic benefit of continuation classes—Rosy estimate of its amount—Not one hundredth of the national loss caused by neglect of Popular Education to teach our boys their first duty.

I HAVE finished the task that I set before me when I began this letter. I have examined some of the tendencies and results of our present system of Popular Education as they appear in the quality of much of the daily work that is being done by the people, and in the quality of the vast proportion of our popular evening amusements. But all through my argument, I have been constantly reminded that, important as these matters may be in themselves, they recede into a negligible background in presence of the life-and-death conflict which we are hourly waging before a drawn curtain

that hides from us unimaginable issues to all our national endeavours and undertakings.

I am painfully aware, sir, that I am making an altogether inconsiderate use of my privilege of addressing you. But will you forgive me if I go on to trace the connexions of Popular Education with the main drift of political thought and action that has guided our nation during the past most critical twenty years, when we should have been preparing for this irrevocable decision of our fate? And may I also try to push for a few uncertain steps into the tangles and obscurity that will encompass this country after the war, so far as Popular Education may help us to find our way amongst them, or may only the more darkly involve us?

Obviously the Board of Education is not able to give our children a course of instruction in practical—that is, in party politics. For as you know, sir, there are virtually no practical politics in England outside party politics. It would be as difficult to draw up for our children a code of indisputable political dogma, as it has been found to draw up for them a code of indisputable religious dogma. Yet these two subjects, more than all others, are those upon which it is of sovereign importance for our future citizens to be guided towards a sound judgment. For the right conduct of our daily lives depends upon our religious belief and practice, and the right conduct of the nation's affairs depends upon our political belief and practice. And we do not escape from our religious and political difficulties by wrapping them up in generalities and phrases, and making temporary concessions to popular ignorance and passion. All political and religious difficulties that are so evaded, return upon us in a short time with multiplied clamours to be faced and fought out. Now, more than ever in

our history, we are called upon to find a sure reason for our beliefs and practice. And now more than ever we are wandering in confusion and indecision about many of the matters upon which a plain "Yes" or "No" is of necessity for our national existence.

But upon most of the turbulent questions that are gathering in force to perplex and divide the nation in the coming years, you can give no authoritative instruction to your scholars. Now, at this tremendous moment, and at all others, when opposing sign-posts stand at the crossways of our nation's destiny, to point us to safety or to cheat us to destruction, you cannot issue a loud imperative order to your hosts of future citizens, "To the right!" or "To the left!" You may, indeed, give them a very devious jerky compass of "general" education, but you cannot tell them plainly that the main highway of the nation's safety runs to the north or to the south, to the east or to the west. For on many of the matters upon which it is, perhaps, life or death to get right leadership, one party of our politicians, as soon as the war is over, will be pressing headlong to the north, and another will be scrambling to the south, and the remainder will be running about the country in bye lanes of their own choosing.

You will claim that the "general" education you are giving your scholars in history, in economics, and in political science will guide them by and by to form a sound opinion upon each question of national importance as it arises.

Is that not refuted by our present experience? What was the question of transcendent importance for every Englishman to consider and reconsider, and to form a right opinion upon, from the years 1890 onwards—the question upon whose solution then, his very daily bread

depends to-day, his whole resources, his life and the lives of those dearest to him, and the future of the British Empire? Surely, in comparison with the question of whether he should be ready to defend his native land, there was no other question that was worth a careless toss of his mind. Other questions there were of the utmost importance in our internal economy, but till this was settled they were of mere parochial dimensions. For they were all dependent upon the right solution of this one question.

I am sure you will be both indignant and amused at what seems like an attempt to saddle the blame for the war upon our system of Popular Education. You will ask what the Board of Education had to do with the war, how it was concerned to foresee it, how it could have helped to prevent it, or sensibly to diminish its duration and the magnitude of its ravages.

If you will bear with me, sir, I am searching for the foundations of Popular Education. I am trying to find out whether there are not one or two great fundamental rules and principles which must form the basis of any stable and durable system, in the same way that the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments form the basis of any stable and durable system of law and civilized society. Dealing with our daily work, I tried to show that the first rule of all Popular Education is to teach every child to do his individual work thoroughly, honestly, and with all his might, and to train him betimes for that individual work. This governing rule should underlie all Popular Education. It is strange that after fifty years one should be able to announce it as something of a discovery. It is so obvious that it has been almost forgotten. I daresay educational experts are smiling at me. They will smile again, or perhaps

be very angry, when I say that another governing rule or principle of Popular Education should be to impress every boy with the idea that it is his duty to defend his country, and to prepare him so far that he may easily be made fit for that duty.

If this is scouted or contested, let me claim no more than this for the moment, that had this duty been made a part of our system of Popular Education for the last generation, we might possibly have been spared the war altogether; or, if that is unlikely, we should, with quite a comparatively small outlay of treasure and sacrifice of men, have gained a decisive and much earlier victory. It is improbable that a general European war could have been avoided, but at a moderate estimate we could have won it at less than a third of our present costs of all kinds. The incalculable expenditure of money and resources, the sorrows and horrors that have no end, the insecurities and perils of the future, would have been vastly diminished and brought into an easily manageable compass, if only the simple rule of giving our elder boys some preparation for the defence of their country had been adopted in past years. There can surely be no doubt of this, for we had the wealth, the command of the seas, the unbounded natural resources of our Empire, and the matchless strength and valour of that English manhood which is hourly showing itself invincible. We had it all in large easy surplus and unchallengeable supremacy. We needed but to hold our right hand ready for its defence, and we could have made it sure for long cycles to come. And this we could easily have done at less than a third of our present woe-ful costs of all kinds.

However mistaken and pernicious my proposal may be in theory, who can doubt that if it had been put into

practice thirty years ago, it would have spared us more than two-thirds of the miseries and expense of this present war, with its never-ending roll of dead and wounded, and its threatening outlook of prolonged national poverty and semi-bankruptcy. It may be a most vicious and reprehensible principle that I am advocating, but, put into active working a generation ago, its pregnant result would have been that at this hour, instead of waiting in a dreadful hush of expectancy for renewed unknown emergencies, sacrifices, and calamities, we should now be the peaceful citizens of a strengthened and unassailable British Empire, with all its borders secure, with all its impulses quickened, with all its activities enlarged, with its future prosperity assured, and offering with both hands a rich choice of happy destinies to its millions of sons.

That would have been our position to-day if the defence of our country had been made a part of our "general" education a generation ago. What a roar of fury and anger would have gone up through all the length and breadth of the land, if it had been proposed to teach and enforce this first duty of citizenship! But, sir, this very obvious duty, and this very opprobrious doctrine are what we have been teaching to every man and boy in the Empire for the last four years, by every mouth and every agency, in every paper, from every pulpit, on every hoarding in every city. And we have had to teach it in all the scuffle of hurry, disorganization, alarm, and desperation.

And at what a cost! Would it not have been better to have made it a part of our scheme of "general" education twenty or thirty years ago, to have taught it in no spirit of defiance or militarism, but as a necessary insurance against irretrievable national disaster, with a

wide view of our great responsibilities and our great possessions, with a calm determination to accept our responsibilities, and to defend our possessions?

While I have been writing this letter to you, England has been throwing into the furnace of the great battle, like mere stubble and faggots upon a bonfire, hundreds of thousands of her sons, the vigour and promise of her remaining manhood, many of them little more than boys who a few years ago were shouting in their playgrounds. There they have stood, those schoolboys of yesterday, waiting their turns to be sacrificed; fighting, agonizing, dying in cheerful recklessness; called to their fearful destiny by our political teachers and leaders and rulers of past years, who had ears but would not hear, and eyes but would not see.

Not from lack of bravery and valiancy of manhood, O dear, dear land, not from lack of devotion to thee and high-tuned self-sacrificing spirit, but from lack of vision, from lack of guidance, art thou to-day set about with dangers and uncertainties, staggering and battering a dreadful path towards that still distant goal, drained of thy treasure, drained of thy heart's blood, but stronger than ever in reserves of steadfast endurance, and richer than ever in stores of deathless resolve!

And with right vision, with right guidance, we could so easily have forestalled all these frightful commitments, and bought our national security at a fraction of our present debts and losses and sufferings. Sometimes, on a still night, a quiver of the south-east wind brings to our straining ears a faint, distant thud, more like a pulse of the air than a sound, and we know that two or three minutes ago that muffled pad in the silence was a roaring thunder crash in Flanders, which perhaps

laid desolate English homes, and left them in loneliness that will never be comforted, and in sorrow that will never be assuaged. Ceaselessly, ceaselessly, with ever blazing lust and energy of destruction, those thunder crashes have violated the air, and poisoned the earth, and beaten into the dust our dearest flesh and our fairest hopes. Ceaselessly, ceaselessly, with no regard for the hours and the seasons and the years, they have blasted out havoc and death. Their clamour is never quelled; their hunger is never appeased. And it goes on. The mad, insatiate, remorseless engine goes on. Already the sum of its ruin and devastation is past all count, all picturing. It goes on. Who can dare to guess what infinite, unimaginable toll of sacrifice and suffering it may yet exact from us, and leave us to bear? It goes on.

And so easily in the bygone careless years, we might have paid the fractional price of redemption from its worst evils and miseries and losses.

If by some touch of our finger upon the wheel of fate, some sleight of mind beyond any wonder of magic, we could now instantly arrest the long, blind, labouring march of those millions tramping towards anguish, mutilation, and nameless graves; ransom our kin from all the hazards of wounds and death; convoy them safely home, and set them busy about their cheerful customary tasks of peace—If by some divine alchemy of healing, we could make whole every tortured limb; unseal every blinded eye; raze out the written troubles from every distracted brain; build up every broken body in its former glad soundness and strength; dismantle every hospital of its ghastly array, and give every inmate a full discharge and warranty of health—If we could release all our despairing prisoners bowed down with

misery, starvation, loathsome insult, and grinding toil and torment in that inhuman land; cancel their martyrdoms, and give them again their birthright of native freedom—If we could cleanse our hearts of this gnawing, clinging, unsleeping worm of suspense and ache and dread, and be once more at ease in our undarkened homes; if we could untie all the hands that are now slaving in the service of death and destruction, and put them to the uses and ministry of health and life; if we could write off the heavy mortgages of our children's inheritance that we have given to the extortionate future; silence every alarm of war, and set straight all its confusions and disorders—If we could work this miracle of enfranchisement, not only in our own land, but in all our sister lands, in outraged Belgium and Serbia, in demented Russia, and in stricken, ravished France; raise again the stones of her desecrated churches and ruined towns, and dress them in all their mellowed beauty and seductive grace; wipe away the bestial pollution of her soil, and plant her stark desolation with gardens and harvests and homesteads—If now, when the red May blossoms are falling on our English lawns, and the red blood drops are falling on the slopes of the Aisne, we could staunch every wound of the war, strike back the sharpened pendulum that swings its keen edge towards the entrails of France—If we could dissolve all the shuddering spectacle that stretches from the sand dunes of the North Sea to the pools of the Adriatic; avert and frustrate the great doom that hangs over the nations; tear out these foul records from the book of history, and laugh at them as foolish tales of necromancy; roll into oblivion all the terrors, wrongs, cruelties, despairs, crimes, and abominations of these last years—If we could gather from the clods of Flanders

and Picardy the crumbling remains of our lost ones, and bid them leap to life, washed from all charnel taints, clasp them to us again, husband to wife, son to mother, lover to dear affianced bride; the myriads of our slaughtered dead, redeemed from the grave, warm with throbbing life in our arms, their steps once more upon the stairs, their faces at the daily table, their voices mingling again with ours in homely talk and jest——

If we could annul it all! If we could awake from this nightmare, and find our fond imagining to be sober, happy truth! If we could issue this fiat and see it accomplished before our eyes!

But this power was largely in our hands a generation ago, if we had but used it. Not all of this beneficent witchcraft could have been wrought by the wisest national foresight, the alivest and most patient statesmanship, the most united discipline of patriotism in a populace educated to know and understand the things that make for its lasting welfare and peace. Not all of it, but surely the vastly greater part. Surely our present national dangers and perplexities and losses could have been largely avoided, and we could at this moment have been in easy and tranquil possession of our vanished treasures and sanctities and securities, if those who directed Popular and Political Education twenty years ago had recognized and upheld the principle that I am advocating; if they had instilled into the mind of every boy that it is his duty to be ready to defend his country, and if they had given him some early rudimentary training.

Why was it not done? The need for it was plain before our eyes, and crying into our ears. We have done it since with all our might and main. What our Popular Educators would not teach us, the Germans have

taught us; and with all their characteristic thoroughness. Our lesson has cost us already some six or eight thousand millions of pounds, which may amount to double before we have finally dismissed our teachers. And we could have done it for ourselves at a fifth or a tenth of the cost! Can it be such a very vicious principle that saves us thousands of millions of pounds and the best manhood of our country—even if it only does us this service once in fifty years or so; even if its sovereign importance only becomes apparent when we have recklessly flouted and denied it, or never becomes apparent at all to the multitude, because its very operation prevents them from seeing the evils it guards them against?

Can it be such a very vicious principle? Why did we not set about instructing our boys in their primary duty of defending their country in 1890 instead of 1914? Who laughs at me for making such a preposterous suggestion? The carnage and misery and ruin that are spread over Europe laugh at him. In those years we had in our hands the instrument of our deliverance from the worst of our present losses and calamities, if we had but perceived the truth of this first principle of National Education which I am affirming. But that truth had lain so long neglected in the national soul that it had become bedridden. Even to-day many of our politicians are trying to legislate for the years before the war, are still living in a little world of party exigencies and opportunities.

What is of importance for every one of us to remember to-day, and this with no thought of useless re-crimination, in no spirit of political partizanship, with no motive of political gain, but only with a fervent desire to find a body of men who will faithfully direct the

aims and energies of this nation to large and fruitful issues in a world where all will be changed, and where all our old political watchwords and catchwords will be as idle as the wagging of gossips' tongues round a village pump a hundred years ago—what is of importance for every one of us to remember for our guidance in that unknown future, is the fact that, for a generation before the war, our politicians of all parties ignored the clearly visible portents and the clearly audible mutterings of the storm that was gathering to shake the earth; ignored them, despised them, or mocked at them; lulled the country into false security; minding only the political accommodations of the hour; taking no heed of the great permanent laws of national welfare; fatuous, flaccid, supine; more blind than Balaam, less wise than Balaam's ass, for the ass saw plainly enough the threatening angel of the Lord, standing but a few steps onward with a drawn sword in his hand.

Our politicians went their way, pursuing the path to national disaster; busily setting vote traps for an electorate muddled and dizzied and uproarious with sips and rinsings of "general" education; marketing in spurious prosperity; managing our great Empire as a factory for turning out social reforms at the shortest possible notice; or as a quack medicine shop with a miraculous specific for every disease of the body politic; or as a universal emporium for distributing bagman's bliss and bank holiday liberty to everybody at the lowest possible price.

Some of the social reforms were necessary, beneficial, urgent; many of them were the mere whimsies and topsy-turvies of fanatical cliques, or grabbings to get hold of the national counterpane which covers us all; pilferings of the stores of the commonwealth for the

benefit of a class or a private interest. All of the social reform legislation of the years before the war was of small importance or value compared with the necessity for preparing our citizens to defend their country.

Is that denied? Will anyone name any half-dozen measures passed in those years, that saved or gained the country so much as a twentieth part of what we should have saved or gained by the timely instruction of our boyhood and manhood in the performance of this first duty to the State, and by shaping our national course with a provident foresight of the ever threatening and darkening future?

But our politicians of both parties disregarded this first great national duty, put it aside; the influential majority of them denounced all suggestion of it as something absurd, superfluous, barbarous, criminal, and—so terribly expensive. Expensive! Besides all this, to train our boys in a sober, unoffending, but resolute patriotism, would have shown an unworthy suspicion and distrust of our good neighbour, Germany, not to be harboured in gentle, pacific, British breasts.

Why did our politicians neglect and despise this first great national duty all through the years when, of all the years of our long history, its obligations were most plain and most imperative, when every movement that Germany made was a manifest declaration of her intent; when every consideration of prudent national economy, every admonition of the past, and every augury of the future incessantly called upon them to fulfil it? Were they so destitute of natural sagacity as to be unable to see that our great Empire and all our possessions were vulnerable, and were unprotected on every side, and lay at the mercy of any chance outbreak of envy or malice? I will not rate their intelligence so

meanly as to think it. Were they, as the credulous populace now believe, the secret friends, the subsidized agents, or the blackmailed dependents of our enemy, conscious and active traitors to their country? I will not rate my own intelligence so meanly as to think it.

There may be a few shady and disreputable transactions on the part of individuals which up to the present are unrevealed and unproved. But I am persuaded that the general body of English politicians were and are as irreproachable in matters of personal honour as any other class, and have made, and are ready to make, as great and willing sacrifices for the national safety.

Why, then, in the generation before the war, were they so blind to our great permanent interests; why, in this first duty of preparing and providing for our defence, were they so lax, so neglectful, so heedless of their high responsibilities? Why were many influential members of them so loud and busy in leading the nation towards our present perils and disasters?

It may be urged that the nation itself was responsible, since it put these politicians in power. But what kind of Political Education had the nation received? What were its leading principles and tenets? Whence were they derived?

What part and influence had Popular Education in shaping the mould of political thought, and cutting the main channels of political action? For though it is plain, sir, that you cannot issue a set of political opinions to your scholars, I am sure you would agree that the general policy of your office, its main principles and aims, must largely determine the political bias of the next generation, must prompt certain political impulses, and give direction and impetus to much of our forthcoming legislation. Indeed, I suppose you would

claim that it is one of the chief objects of Popular Education to train a future electorate to demand wise legislation.

Would you say that up till now, our system of Popular Education has attained that primary object? Would you say that it was wise legislation that left undefended all the sources of our national prosperity and well-being; all our store of accumulated wealth; all the wide, rich stretches of our scattered dominions; left to hazard the daily bread and means of livelihood of every one of us; left all the jewels of our Empire displayed in manifest insecurity, and gave a careless general invitation to a cunning envious enemy to drop in and plunder us at any time convenient to him? In view of our present situation, would you affirm that the greater part of our social, and much of our imperial legislation has not been misguided and chaotic; heedful only of minor or imaginary necessities; blind to our real and imminent emergencies; inspired by no clear national purpose, except that of giving a good, easy time to everybody who would only vote hard and persistently for it?

Would you say that Popular Education was not therein concerned, was nowise accessory to the passing of that legislation, or accountable for its negligences and blindness; that these matters lie outside its domain and sphere of action? Why, then, what a naïve, impotent, blundering imposture does this same Popular Education proclaim itself to be, that teaches everybody algebra, and teaches nobody the first duty of patriotism that assures him his daily bread and butter!

But I am sure you will allow, nay, you will insist, that Popular Education has had, and must have increasing influence in guiding political thought and shaping political action; that its ministers, administrators, and

teachers, by the laws they frame, the principles they inculcate, the ideals they set before our children, and the notions they instil into their receptive minds, have a very real, if indirect, influence over the whole body of future legislation.

May I, without impertinence, ask you whether, if you had been Minister of Education a generation ago, and had foreseen our present dangers and adversities, you would not have made it your first business to permeate every school in England with an enlightened, resolute patriotism, and to impress every boy with the urgent necessity of holding himself ready to defend his country when the dreadful hour should strike? Am I wrong in supposing that you would have considered this matter of more importance than continuation classes, that you would have put it into the forefront of the legislation you introduced, and into practice throughout the kingdom?

It may be urged that all that is past and done with, and not now worth our argument and speculation. The millennium is dawning, and the unfortunate oversight of our politicians is amply atoned for by the same comforting assurance that the housemaid gives when she has broken the priceless china vase that gold cannot replace—"It shan't happen again."

I will deal with that fallacious post-mortem excuse by and by.

Meantime, may I bring to remembrance the fact that Popular Education, during those blind and nugatory years, was conceived and administered in a spirit of antagonism to any preparation of our boys for what is to-day the whole task and business of their lives? The general aims and tendencies of Popular Education, all its associations and affinities were opposed to giving

them any instruction in what was soon to be their most pressing employment, demanding all their energy and intelligence. There was not merely neglect and indifference to any such teaching and preparation; there was not merely passive resistance; there was incessant and active denunciation of it as something wholly superfluous, foolish, demoralizing, brutal, evil, and ruinous to the finances of the country. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that, in the last generation, the great majority of our boys and young men were industriously educated *not* to defend their country.

Where lay the fault? I will not be so vain and conceited as to imagine that all our ministers and political leaders, deeply read in the lessons of history as most of them were, trained and experienced in statecraft, with full sources of information at their command—I will not flatter myself that they were less discerning, less able to form an estimate of the future necessities and obligations of the nation, than a casual observer and stander-by from politics like myself. How, then, was it that through all those years they remained with sealed eyes and ears; nay, they shut their eyes and plugged their ears; incurably afflicted with Falstaff's disease, a kind of sleeping in the blood, a kind of deafness, the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking?

Was it not that Popular Education was leavening and shaping political thought and action, and directing the main course of legislation, not towards the wise, large measures which events have proved were urgent and vital for the safety of the nation, and for its ultimate well-being and prosperity, but towards measures of class and social re-arrangement that promised some immediate benefit to some section of the new electorate, and

secured office and party advantage to the politicians who promoted them?

In the eighties after the Reform Bill there arose the cry that we must educate our new masters. What really happened was that our new masters educated us. So far as Popular Education had any influence on legislation—and it cannot be denied that there was increasing action and reaction between Popular Education and politics—so far it obscured the vision of our statesmen in foreign affairs, and corrupted their intellectual honesty in domestic affairs.

If a man drugs me with ether, and takes from me my watch, he knows he has robbed me, and, in his heart, he probably calls himself a thief. But if, in some greatly involved matter of politics, a man drugs me with the fumes of his words and his whimsies, and takes from me my power of right judgment, he doesn't know that he has robbed me, and he probably calls himself a Social Reformer. Very likely, before drugging me, he has carefully and systematically drugged himself, and then, if it is to our personal or class interest to be deceived, we go on drugging each other, and we form a caucus to drug all our neighbours.

And by and by a monstrous bill comes in for the State to pay.

Was there not great and widely-spread intellectual dishonesty amongst our politicians in the years before the war? And was not much of it due to the pressure from an electorate whom Popular Education, by its declared aims and policy, had encouraged to vote, not for the ultimate welfare and safety of the State, but for what any scrap majority conceived to be their own palpable immediate personal interests? In the light of our present experience and knowledge, it seems an ill-

timed jest, a cruel irony to remind the great body of voters that they were blindly and obstinately opposed to any national teaching of the first duty of citizenship; that they made it impossible for our politicians to provide anything approaching the necessary means for the defence of the Empire.

The politicians kept in office. I do not say that the intellectual dishonesty that allowed them to remain there was conscious and deliberate. We rarely analyse our motives very closely when a searching examination of them would disturb our interests or confound our whimsies.

Of all the mental ailments that afflict our race, intellectual dishonesty is the most prevalent, the most readily infectious, the most obscure in its multiple origins, the hardest to diagnose correctly, the most subtle in its workings, the most disastrous in its ravages. We are all of us easily susceptible to it; many of us, like the "carriers" of typhoid, go through life sowing its germs broadcast, without even suspecting that it is in our system, and that we are spreading the plague.

Was not this indefinable malady very rife in the House of Commons during the years before the war? Is it not endemic in the precincts of Westminster? And was it not largely accountable for the blindness that closed the eyes of our politicians to the shadow of the coming doom, and to the necessity of preparing a shelter from it. Doubtless this intellectual dishonesty was mainly unconscious. Assuredly, many of our politicians were free from it altogether. Some of them, indeed, if wholly mistaken, were nobly and generously mistaken. And of the others, let us charitably suppose, that in effectively working their party machines to bring all these horrors upon us, to cut off our best

manhood, to saddle the State with an unbearable burden of debt for generations, and to drag the Empire and European civilisation into jeopardy—let us charitably suppose that in working their party machines to these ends, they were actuated by the noblest and purest motives, and were genuinely convinced that they were striving their utmost for the welfare of the country.

However we may allot the blame for our present situation, it is plain that the sum of credit we give to the honesty and faithfulness of the politicians who were in power, we must debit from their foresight, sagacity, and statesmanship. And the sum of credit we give to their foresight, sagacity, and statesmanship, we must debit from their honesty and faithfulness. Had I been a responsible minister in any of the recent governments, I think I could never meet one of those crippled wrecks in blue that make England a vast hospital, without the accusing thought, "Perhaps I might have saved that man."

I hear you asking, with natural irritation, "What has all this to do with Popular Education? Do I ascribe to it all the evils that have visited this planet since the lapse of Eve?"

No, sir, I am now charging it with one omission only. But that omission was so fatal in its consequences, that it cancels into less than nothingness all the benefactions we have received from it. I mean the omission to teach our boys what every one of them would be called upon to practise at the hourly risk of his life; what it was most urgent for their own sakes, and most imperative for the welfare of the State for them to learn. I will claim that the Boy Scouts movement has had a higher influence on the boys of England than the teaching they have received in the national schools;

and that in respect of building up their characters in all essentials of manhood, it has been of far more real value to the country.

In the matter of national finance, this cardinal omission of Popular Education has been ruinous beyond all power of computation. We are now well within sight of a National Debt of some ten thousand millions of pounds. It is the confessed aim of your new Education Bill to render an economic service to the State by indiscriminately forcing some items of "general" education upon everybody under the age of eighteen, however unpalatable it may be to the majority of them, however foreign to their tastes, aptitudes, and life vocation. Perhaps those whom your Bill, categorically, but a little ungallantly, describes as "young persons," may be found to have wills of their own in this matter, and to develop unsuspected powers of evasion. The "young person" from sixteen to eighteen is not a very tractable creature, and is fertile in devices of escape from wholesome instruction and salutary restraint. I had only half a dozen of them on my hands; you will have many millions. I hope, sir, your perplexities in dealing with them may not be multiplied in strict proportion to my own.

Setting aside any economic benefit that your Bill may, or may not, confer upon the nation, I readily allow that "young persons" of sixteen to eighteen would often be far better employed in the study of abstract problems of science, mathematics, or philosophy, even if they do not understand them, than in giving their leisure to the very concrete personal matters that are apt to allure and absorb the thoughts at that impressionable age. Cicero or Euclid is a much safer and more desirable companion for recalcitrant adolescence, than

the average "young person" of the opposite sex who is employed over the way, or picked up in an evening walk. Alas, that to the "young person" they should be less seductive! This is a subject upon which I will abstain from distressing myself. With some feeling of relief, I leave it unreservedly in your hands to settle with the "young persons" themselves.

Returning to the economic question, when you say that "no country in the long run suffers an economic injury from an improvement in the general education of its population," I understand you to mean, in this instance, that by forcibly bestowing information about Cicero, and other packets of general knowledge upon all "young persons" up to the age of eighteen, you expect to bring a substantial profit to our empty exchequer. You will admit that the process is somewhat roundabout in its method, and somewhat obscure in its working, and that its benefits cannot be exactly estimated. Some of us are a little inquisitive about the precise amount, and a little sceptical as to which side of the national ledger the balance may finally have to be placed. But whatever our doubts, I am sure there is no taxpayer in the kingdom who does not most fervently pray that your most sanguine expectations may be surpassed; and who, if they are merely realized to some small extent, will not overwhelm you with gratitude and praise.

Indeed, so universal is the desire for your success, and so confident the belief that it is assured, that already the papers have showered columns of glowing praise upon your scheme. The chorus of their applause was so hearty, and their enthusiasm so spontaneous and jubilant, that I thought at first I must be reading the notices of a new revue at one of our popular variety

theatres. For I know of no other matter of general civic interest, that in our present circumstances could kindle such warm and lively sympathy and national congratulation.

Nor, in respect of any pecuniary benefactions that your bill may distribute, shall you find a more eager or grateful recipient than myself. No stupid, obstinate preference for my own opinion, shall stand in the way of my changing it, the moment I get some reasonably trustworthy evidence that my income tax has been reduced a penny in the pound, by the compulsory attendance of all "young persons" at your continuation classes. In fact, when that moment comes, I shall be found imploring you, with all the zeal of a new convert, to raise the age to forty at the least. I hope this may show you how willing, nay anxious, I am to be convinced of the economic wisdom of this clause in your bill.

I am aware, sir, that you cannot disentangle from our general revenue, the amount that will flow into the exchequer from your detention of all "young persons" in class rooms until they are eighteen. I will not ask you to give us even an approximate estimate of this golden largesse to the people. But you would be able to say roughly whether it will be a mere dribble of a few millions, or a soaking rain of affluence upon a bare and thirsty land. Probably you would assess it in your own mind, very loosely and indefinitely, at something between these two extremes. Let us assess it in our most sanguine, most extravagant mood. As our valuation cannot be falsified, let us deal generously with an impoverished nation. Let us nurse the wildest hopes; let us fondle the rosiest credulities. What good round sum shall we say will accrue to the State from forcibly instructing all "young persons" up to eighteen, in mat-

ters that to the great majority of them can have no concern with their daily work and activities? Let us put it at some figure higher than the highest possibility.

Will it then be one fifth, one tenth, one hundredth of the sum that the nation has squandered, or will have to squander, because it did not, in years gone by, instruct all male "young persons" in the first duty of citizenship, and train them to be ready to defend their country?

Forgive me, sir, if I have roused your indignation by calling upon you to make such a calculation. You will say that there is no means of establishing an equation of circumstances, contingencies, and results. And, further, granted that a rigid comparison could be made, and an exact balance struck, it could serve no useful purpose, and would be a mere irritating reminder of our past folly and blindness. Why, then, do I, like a nagging shrew, continue to harp upon yesterday's faults and mistakes in the household? They are past and done with, and the whole family is hard at work, trying to repair them. Those who committed them and caused the general upset and damage, are now, many of them, toiling night and day to ward off further destruction, and to make our home tidy and fit to live in once more.

I gladly acknowledge that. I am sensible of their sleepless work and care, and am deeply grateful to them; boundlessly grateful and beggared of thanks to the tireless, indomitable steward and guardian of our despoiled estate, who with every energy of brain and fervent soul and will addressed to his stupendous task, bearing a burden more than mortal shoulders are able to bear, is labouring to bring us out of this chaos and wreckage.

CHAPTER IV

(July—August 1918)

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Legislating for the millennium—The prophet Micah beats swords into ploughshares—The prophet Joel counters him and beats ploughshares into swords—War and Design in Nature—An automatic peace-machine—The philanthropist in Laputa and his safety dustbin—Possible material profit from war—Greater certainty of spiritual profit—Difficulties of constitution of League—The master fact for our statesmen to remember—Germany's future attitude towards Britain—Do we not know this nation?—The League of Nations a fruitful field for German intrigue—The servant girl and the fair young man—League of Nations a futility or a danger—Improbability of all the nations being wise for all of the time—Dark anarchic forces gathering on the horizon—Governing the world by a Committee—The war after the war—Victories of Peace compared with Victories of war—English and American commercial practices—A League of Nations, sooner or later, causes war—Approaching ground swell after this tempest—Balancing alternations of peace and war through all history—A soldier the final custodian of peace—By recognizing this we avoid or shorten war—Immediate and remote dangers of a League of Nations considered—Hecate and false security—War and the dark backward and abysm of Time—War and the dark forward and abysm of time—Canute and the framers of a League of Nations—American delay in entering the war—American mothers and the war trumpets of Europe—America's unique and fortunate position—Speculation on future of American civilization—Four possible future states of world civilization—The earth littered with combustile matter—The two sign-posts.

WHY, then, dwell upon the past? And especially upon this unfortunate oversight of our politicians in not preparing for the war? Surely the con-

temptation and discussion of that national error of judgment can offer us no lesson or warning for the future; for, as soon as peace is signed, the millennium will dawn by the unanimous decree of a League of Nations. Let us make haste to legislate for the millennium. Let us, victims of miseries and mistakes through all these troublous chapters of our history, take a peep at the end of the book and find it written on the glowing last page that we shall live happily ever afterwards. How like we are to the readers of a tale, or the sitters at a play! We insist that the author shall give us a happy ending or we will not buy his book. But the Author of the book of our fate cares nothing for popular approbation and applause. He writes the plainest, sternest truths and makes no concession to the public taste for honied sentiment and luxurious dreams. For every word He writes is assured of final universal circulation. Sooner or later He forces us to buy every volume He issues; and always at a price that leaps upward, the longer we delay.

Some natural hopes we must needs indulge for very pity of our present state; some fairy pageantry of beatitude we must needs paint upon the unsubstantial cloud fleece of the future, or we should faint and die on this dark, thorny, toilsome road. Who is there that, casting one shuddering look on this perverted world to-day, does not make one with all its despairing, tortured, starving peoples, and throwing himself into the vast, kneeling assembly, cry out with them, "An oath! An oath! We have an oath in heaven! Witness, ye ever burning lights above! Never, to the end of time, shall this mad, blundering, accursed murderer, War, again work havoc and ruin upon our earth!"

That cry has gone up to heaven before. That vow

has often been registered by acclaiming mankind, in their dire agony of body and soul. Men have always been convinced of the advantages of peace, and the miseries and cruelties of war. The prophet Micah, with all the zeal of our modern Pacifists, and in choicer diction, announced a time when swords should be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks. Unfortunately the prophet Micah was countered by the prophet Joel, who started a movement for beating ploughshares into swords, and pruning-hooks into spears. Our own Pacifists, if history, or facts, or aught that pertains to reason could teach them, might notice that these opposing movements have continued ever since, with balancing alternations and constant intermittent recurrence. Did not Voltaire, with his superb irony, expose to his countrymen the miseries and absurdities and senseless horrors of war? Yet in the next generation they were following Napoleon, and laying waste all Europe, having in the meantime proclaimed universal brotherhood, and chopped off each other's heads. Again our Pacifists may note that chopping off heads and cutting throats is the inevitable sequel to proclaiming universal brotherhood. And so on till 1851, when it was fondly imagined that wars would be caused to cease by building in Hyde Park, what Ruskin called a large cucumber frame between two chimneys, and displaying therein a quantity of Manchester and other wares.

If there is any Design in this universal web of human things, War has hitherto been a main and inextricable part of that Design. Its crimson threads run through all the tapestry of history, though often they are hidden from us under the smiling panorama of peace that is displayed. The great loom of Time has

gone on weaving its variegated, complicated pattern of human affairs for the countless thousands of years since man began to climb upwards from the ape, but the dreadful red figure has never long been absent from the foreground of the scene. Punctually at the appointed hour—it may be at the end of ten, or twenty, or forty years—punctually the great loom has begun again to weave the figure of the terrible red monster, and he has emerged; in his right hand a sword, and his left hand a cup of unendurable agonies and cruelties and sorrows.

We, drinking from that cup, cry out against its bitterness. We try to push it from us. The terrible red monster grips us, forces it through our teeth, as deep as to our throats, makes us swallow its very dregs. We register our vehement vow that it shall never again be offered to our lips, or to the lips of our children. We will vote against it at the next election. Does not an undeciphered tablet brought from the ruins of Assyria, record that at the general election which took place when Noah was building his ark, the electorate of that day voted unanimously against the deluge? We will certainly vote against this greater, fouler evil at the next election, and at every election for the next fifty years.

Unhasting, unresting, the great loom of Time is already beginning to weave the future history of the coming generations of men. The crimson threads that now stretch all across the frame, dyed deep in the blood of the nations, will disappear, and embed themselves in a warp and woof of rejoicing landscapes, peopled with olive gatherers and reapers of corn. Having served His purpose in His unfathomable Design, may not those crimson threads, when they return to the

hands of the Weaver, be then for ever dipped in soft dove tints and restful hues of peace, never again to be woven into the monstrous lineaments of war?

Who does not hope for it? Who would not further it?

It was a pleasing medieval superstition that mandrakes, torn shrieking from the treacherous soil that had engendered them, after they had been propitiated by soothing rites, ceased to be the couriers of evil, and became the wise, familiar spirits and loving oracles of the household then enshrined them. So may we propitiate the mandrakes that we have torn from this murder pit of war, conjuring away their attributes of hell, and transforming them into the guardians and counsellors of the nations through long generations of universal peace! *

Who does not hope for it? Who would not further it?

He would be a bold and foolish man who should declare that the recurrent dream of the ages will not at last come true after this war; that the weapons of slaughter, when they drop from our hands, will not henceforth be packed away in the museum of history, nevermore to be used for the torture and destruction of mankind, but only to be shown as curiosities and antique relics in the holiday times to come. Surely, if ever men will learn to avoid war, now is the acceptable moment; surely if ever they can devise some cunning interlocking machine that will automatically deal out perpetual peace to the nations, now is the time to fashion it. We are being carried towards a new civilization. Who shall say what may, or may not, be possible amidst new forces that we cannot estimate, and in new conditions that we cannot realize? It may be found possible to construct an automatic peace machine, and it may be found possible to get it to work,

at any rate for a time. The necessity for it is so obvious and so pressing, that we can but watch with all sympathy and hope, the efforts of those who are so industriously beginning to put its parts together; we can but wish them success with all our hearts.

But how long is it likely to work? That all the statesmen of all the nations will have to stand by, and check and regulate its every movement, nobody doubts. That it will need incessant mending and tinkering, nobody doubts. That all the statesmen of all the nations will have to repair it in harmonious co-operation, and adjust its intricate action to meet the varying needs and interests and susceptibilities of all the countries under the sun, nobody doubts. Is it not almost certain that, within the period of a generation or even less, the machine will get out of order and become unmanageable, and this at some moment when all the statesmen are busy oiling and mending it, with their fingers in its complicated cogs? And will not the statesmen be drawn into its furious revolutions, while the unruly irresponsible machine clatters itself to destruction, and mangles and wrecks everything around it?

Something like this has happened to the peace machine which the Russian democracy constructed upon the fall of the Czar. Why should we think that a larger, more complicated machine, constructed upon what are virtually and fundamentally the same principles of action, will not, sooner or later, grind out the same results to its inventors and its victims?

The last time I was in Laputa, I met there a philanthropist, who had a most engaging scheme for ridding the world of all the inconveniences, nuisances, and diseases attendant upon the universal prevalence of dust. His quite unassailable argument was, that if

we could once and finally collect all the dust in the world, and put it into a large safe and lock it up, we should henceforth have a quite tidy, wholesome, pleasant earth to live upon; that we should save half our expenses on housemaids, and all our expenses on dustmen and water-carts; that we should be free from unpleasant smells, and rid ourselves of flies; and that all the filth and dirt diseases would be eradicated. As he enlarged upon the great and manifest blessings that his scheme would confer upon humanity, I caught his enthusiasm, and heartily wished him all possible success. He thanked me, and said that he had already built one safe, and had stored in it a large heap of dust, when he found out that he had miscalculated the total quantity of dust that there was in the world; moreover, some evil-disposed persons had bored a hole in his safe, and caused a leakage. However, he would guard against all such error and malice in the future. When I left Lagado, he was busy planning an uncolapsible, impregnable safe, of dimensions and design suitable to the magnificence of his idea.

Now if we could but sweep up all the poisonous dust and germ-laden filth of greed, hate, intrigue, pride, rivalry, selfishness, discontent, envy, rancour, stupidity, jealousy, and ambition that lie littering amongst the nations, and that in times past have bred and festered into war—if we could collect it all into one heap and put it into a large safe, and call it “A League of Nations”—Ah, if we could!

Let us for the time shirk all responsibility for the caprices of future events. Let us cast about, and try to get some anchorage, not amongst the clouds, but on the hard bed rock of reality. Let us get a tight grip of unchallengeable facts, and make them surety for

our national aims and efforts. In all the bewilderment and confusion of our present hopes and endeavours, what are the main things we may be sure about and build upon?

We may be sure that the fundamental instincts and passions of humanity will not change, until man becomes a creature of a genus so unlike ourselves, that his affairs and his destiny can be no concern of ours. But that day is very far distant. We have certainly risen from a race of crude lemur-like animals. We are certainly groping and agonizing upwards from the brute. But how slowly and how obliquely! We may be sure that for centuries to come, the masses of mankind will be swayed and moved and whirled about by the same impulses, instincts, and passions that have moved them for centuries in the past. And as the interests of individual nations are always partly in conflict and partly in collusion, it is improbable to the last degree that any nation will, for any great length of time, be able to pursue any clear policy that it has marked out for itself. The nations and masses of men will, as in the past, be driven along roads they have not chosen, to goals they have not fixed or foreseen. Man will never divine the strategy of Nature. Only rarely and dimly can he follow her tactics, and advance his positions a few yards forward. Even then, though he is not aware of it, he is still fulfilling her strategy.

(I am sure, sir, that you are asking with increasing irritation, what has all this to do with Popular Education and your Education Bill. I own that I seem to be wandering away from the high road of my argument in obscure and devious by-lanes. Bear with me, sir, a little longer. I am making for a fixed point. I will meet you at the top of the hill, yonder, where the op-

posing signposts stand, and where the two ways part.)

It will be urged that in this matter of war, the interests of the nations do not conflict; that it is very plainly to the advantage of them all and severally, to abolish it now and for ever from the planet.

Can we be sure even of that, self-evident though it appears to be on the surface? Undoubtedly it is to the immediate economic interest of the nations generally, to abstain from killing each other's citizens and wrecking each other's property. But can we say that individual nations have not often profited very largely in a material sense, and also in a spiritual sense, from a successful war? If, during the last four years, the scales which have so often hung tremulously balanced midway between heaven and hell, which at this moment hang in their last perilous vacillating poise, if those scales by the addition of some small makeweight thrown in by malignant circumstance, had once dipped in fatal decision against us, can we say that Germany would not have gained an enormous booty of wealth, territory, power, influence, and future prosperity? That the Germans would not henceforth have been the slave-owners of us dispossessed Englishmen, living easily in our heritage, and fattening upon the sweated toil of our outcast children? Nine thousand million pounds is the sum which a German statesman in to-day's paper is calling upon his Government to claim from England, besides large slices of the continents, and vampire economic extortions. A cruel price to pay for the neglect of our Popular Educators in the last generation to teach our boys the first duty of citizenship! A price impossible for the Germans now to exact.

Is it quite impossible? How often in the last four years, have there been moments when a feather's weight

thrown in the scale against us, would have sent our scale to kick the beam, and MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN would have been written on the gravestone of England! And if some crooked jolt of mischance should even now turn the scales against us, will not some such ruinous bill be sent in for us to pay? Whatever economic benefit your system of general education may endow the nation withal, it will be small dust in the balance compared with that staggering, incalculable deficit. And will you not then, sir, be inclined to revise your dictum, and make it read thus: "No country in the long run suffers an economic injury by training its boys to be ready to defend it, and by making this training a part of their general education"?

But alas, sir, if some blind blow out of the dark should yet descend upon us, and disable us in this ever fluctuating conflict, it will not be you, but the Germans who in five years' time will be superintending English education, and drawing up the schedule of our lessons. Bitter and ruthless will be their instruction; severe and prolonged beyond all our power of endurance will be their continuation classes. Happily there is every reason to hope that we shall remain under your milder, less expensive system of Popular Education.

But if we cannot deny that individual nations have often profited materially by war, still less can we deny that individual nations have often profited spiritually by war. Does not a righteous war almost certainly bring spiritual enlargement and enlightenment and enfranchisement to the nation that submits to its iron discipline, and offers its purifying sacrifices? To deny this is to black out from history many of its most inspiring pages; it is to sanctify oppression and tyranny, and to defame the heroic peoples who have hazarded

all and suffered all for the deliverance of their land, and the freedom of their souls. To deny that a righteous war brings spiritual gain, is to pour contempt upon all the exaltations and sacrifices whereby we have proved ourselves and saved ourselves during the last four years; upon all that bands us together in our unconquerable resolve; upon all that encourages us in these fateful hours to affirm with our blood the immutable conviction of our race, that when evil is triumphant men must needs die to overcome it.

But it is claimed that this is the last time in the history of the world when evil will be triumphant, and when men will be called upon to give their lives in resistance to it. The Germans are a race apart, a people apart. When once they are vanquished, it is claimed that no nation will ever arise in the future to tyrannize and devastate the earth. Any little differences of opinion, of rivalries, or covetings, or selfish aims that may spring up amongst the peoples in the future, will be easily charmed away by a vote of the League of Nations.

Is each nation to have equal voting power? It is manifestly unfair, and will probably be found to be unworkable. Is each nation to have voting power in proportion to its population? Again, it is manifestly unfair, and will make the small nations of little or no account. Is each nation to have voting power according to the armament it places at the disposal of the League? Who is to allot the size and functions of each individual armament? To include or to exclude Germany seems to be equally undesirable, and equally obstructive to the safe and honest working of the League. To the nations whom she has pillaged and devastated and murdered, Germany will for a generation be as in-

tolerable as a friend at the council table, as she has been unscrupulous as an enemy in the field.

The constitution of the League is beset with difficulties and provocations to dissension. Still the longing for peace is so urgent and so universal, that it will doubtless be found possible to make the necessary compromises, and to establish it in some form that will give it a chance of temporary success. Indeed the longing for peace is so strong and insistent that it will probably ensure its own fulfilment for many years to come.

Setting aside the possibility of a universal class war, which would obliterate national boundaries, destroy national understandings, and plunge the world into endless anarchy and strife—setting this aside, is any one childish enough to think that, for the next thirty years, whether Germany is inside or outside the League of Nations, we can escape from being on the alert against her intrigues, so far as we leave her any power to intrigue? The one master fact for our statesmen to remember after victory, is that we have robbed Germany of the domination of the world, thwarted all her national hopes and ambitions, crushed her armaments and her commerce, and slaughtered the prime of her manhood. In doing this, we have inflamed the mad murderous instincts of her people to their highest pitch, and roused in her such deep-seated bitter animosity and hungry desperate hate, as no goodwill and conciliation on our part will for a long generation serve to abate.

We had to do this. It was unavoidable. Germany would have it so. We may not wish to remember it. Germany will. At our peril shall we forget it.

Let us try to imagine what our feelings towards

Germany would be for the next thirty or forty years, if she had defeated us, and left us beggared, shamed, and crushed in the ruined corners of our shattered Empire. So far as any spark of national hope, or spunk of national virtue was left in us, could we ever forget it or forgive it? And being disarmed of all weapons of force, should we not cast about for every device to entangle her in the council of nations, on the chance of bringing to a head some combination against her?

Why should we think that Germany will do otherwise? Granted that we gain a complete and decisive victory, and that we build up impregnable barriers on every side against future German aggression, we shall still be confronted with a virile, industrious, prolific, scheming race of some seventy millions, united in a common national purpose as no people have ever been, and nursing against its conquerors a sullen, unquenchable hate and study of revenge. Does any one claim that this will not be the dominant prepossession of the German mind, the driving force of German thought and action, after defeat? He claims that the fundamental instincts and passions of mankind will suddenly change upon the signing of peace. He claims that Germans are endowed beyond all other nations with superhuman attributes of forgiveness, benevolence, and loving kindness to enemies.

The more complete our victory, the more stringently we enforce the military and economic conditions that are necessary for our future peace and security, the more surely we may reckon that a deep, fierce fire of anger, hate, and revenge will be hotly kept alive in every German breast.

We may be sure of that. We may wish it otherwise. We may, and I hope we speedily shall, do all that can be safely done to extinguish the murderous passions and animosities that the war has kindled. The arch criminals, the anointed stage braggart with his gang of robber conspirators and accessory ruffians who have done plain murders and felonies, must be arraigned, brought to trial, and punished before the eyes of all men, and this on a gibbet so high and conspicuous that all the coming generations may see it and say, "This was done to them who kicked over the world's great altar of Justice, and trampled it under their feet." When this is done, let all else be done, and all other sentences passed, by Mercy herself.

But when we have shown the utmost clemency and generosity compatible with the security of the vast future interests committed to our care, we shall still have a running future account with a sullen, humiliated, bankrupt nation whom we have balked of her great prize of world dominion, just as it was within her grasp. It is not credible but that after defeat, Germany's present furious hatred for us will turn to a subterranean, resentful malevolence, all the more deadly because it will be largely curbed and stifled.

To believe otherwise, is to believe that though Germany, by her every act and gesture in the last generation, has shown that she is consistently and deliberately cruel, treacherous, utterly regardless of truth and faith, reckless of all save her own interests, and remorseless in pursuit of them—that though she has shown us all this so plainly, yet, as soon as peace is signed, she will suddenly become something quite different. What is this but to fall into the same error, to lull ourselves

into the same balmy doze of credulous benevolence and fatuous idealism, wherein we were overtaken by the war? What physiological possibility is there of a wolf being suddenly transformed into a lamb? What moral possibility is there of as radical a change in Germany's nature? Yet we are daily asked to shape our future policy, to steer our national course, in the certainty that this metempsychosis will take place as soon as the war is ended. Nay, we are implored to end the war at once, in order that the metempsychosis may take place without delay.

Do we not know this nation? Or, if there is anything yet to learn, will it not be that she has yet deeper depths of perfidy, cruelty, and blood-guiltiness than any we have yet explored? Who can doubt, that supposing we gain the complete and decisive victory whereto all our resolves and energies are bent—who can doubt that, for long years to come, Germany's master feeling will be an intense, stealthy, ever-watchful hatred of the nations that have defeated her; and chiefly of England, who most of all barred the path of her ambition; whose future and permanent interests lie nearest to hers, are most opposed to hers, and are most easily accessible to the creeping wiles of her penetration?

We may deplore the continuance of German hatred after the war. It will be most unwelcome, most undesirable; and terribly disconcerting to the industrious wire-pullers of the millennium. We may do everything in our power to allay and avoid it. But it will remain. Amidst our surrounding uncertainties, it is one of the things that is fixed and sure. Amidst the quakings of this wild upheaval, it is one of the things upon which we may build. It should be a guide and key to our present and future policy. At our peril shall we deny

it, or shut our eyes to its probable intensity and duration.

I shall be accused of seeking to perpetuate enmity between England and Germany. Are not the Germans as a nation very much akin to ourselves? Are there not amongst them good husbands, loving fathers, devoted mothers, faithful friends, kind and charitable persons, honest workers, upright traders, and excellent citizens, even as amongst ourselves, and very much in the same proportions? Is not average human nature in Germany very much upon the same level as in England? Let us therefore make haste to embrace these dear, kind folk.

The impulses and passions, the aims and ambitions of a people are things apart from the impulses and passions, the aims and ambitions of the individual members of that people. They work in a different region of each man's nature, and their collective action does not accord with the private virtues of the nation, and is often in direct violation of them. Our public conduct may be detestable, while our home life is irreproachable. Our public life may be exemplary, while our home life is hideous. I will not let my grocer swindle me because he is a faithful husband. I will not shake hands with the burglar who has stolen my spoons because he is kind to his mother. I will judge him by his dealings with me. I will judge Germany by her dealings with my country, and with Belgium, France, Serbia, Poland, Russia, Rumania, Japan, China, and America.

Let us avoid the entrapping fallacy that, because there are individual Germans who are much like individual Englishmen, therefore after the war the German nation will be like the English nation, and will be disposed to-

wards friendly relations with England, because England, after defeating her, may be disposed towards friendly relations with Germany.

No, I do not seek to perpetuate enmity between the two nations. I do but note that, when the sun of peace shall shine, dark shadows will fall in the foul places of Germany.

When Germany utterly denies and renounces her present aims and ambitions, and wholly changes her methods and temper—when she does this, not by the surface repentance of the lips, the counterfeit contrition of the tongue, but by the surety of deeds and the authentic signature of facts, then, as the passing years shall vouch for her sincerity, let her be gradually admitted to the society and friendships of the nations.

What sign has the German nation as a whole given of any such change of nature, or of any likelihood of it? All the omens point the other way. As I write, the news comes of the wanton sinking of another hospital ship and the wanton murder of its crew. Let us not deceive ourselves. Let us be sure that for a generation after the war, the master passion of the German nation will be a resolute, abiding hatred of England. It cannot be otherwise.

How will that hatred express itself? Disarmed by force, and doubly disarmed by poverty, Germany will be incapable of open, active aggression. All the energy of her hatred will be employed in intrigue against us. Do we not know this nation? Do we not remember with what patient, sleepless, subtle contrivance she wove her net around us before the war, till our trade and all our world interests were fast strangled in its web? That same super-cunning will surely be more actively employed against us after the war, enforced

as it will be by all the bitterness of defeat in the field. What is there to prevent our seeing this, except our preference for living a quiet, comfortable life? Whether Germany is admitted to the League of Nations or not, we shall have to be always on guard against her intrigues.

Now where could Germany find a more fruitful and capacious field for intrigue than in a League of Nations, whose constitution will be most difficult to frame; whose terms and conditions will almost certainly offend some national susceptibilities, and arouse some national jealousies from the outset; whose balances will need constant adjustment, according to the increasing or declining power of any nation to cog them to its own advantage; whose every assembly will probably be a market for the side bargains of secret diplomacy; and whose actual working may sooner or later bring upon us the very evil it was designed to protect us against.

Is not this League of Nations the very instrument that Germany would choose for developing her future intrigues? Has she not already signified her acceptance of it, and generously offered to take the lead in manipulating it? Will it not give her constant opportunities to undermine whatever unity there may be amongst its members, of playing them off against each other, in the hope that in the clash of jangling and conflicting interests, she may somehow shift the balance in her favour, and gain by manoeuvres in council something of what she has lost by defeat in the field? Will it not be to Germany's obvious interest thus to use a League of Nations for her own ends? Then who is so simple as to doubt that Germany will pursue her own interests?

We have already a League of Nations banded against

her. After victory, that league will be strong enough to enforce its decisions upon the world without quibble or intrigue. Can anyone doubt that when the war is ended, some short, quite simple covenant between the nations composing that league, setting forth their main general aims, and proclaiming their determination to uphold the peace of the world against all disturbers—can anyone doubt that such a declaration by the Allied Nations will be a much safer and stronger instrument to work with, than a necessarily complicated, unstable, and precarious league of forty-six nations, with all their discordant interests, rivalries, and jealousies? Can anyone doubt that such an instrument will be much simpler to fashion, much easier to handle, much less pervious to the corruptions of secret diplomacy, much less likely to provoke international friction, and much more likely to secure the peace of the world for a lengthened period? But the advocates of a League of Nations will be satisfied with nothing less than the instant and final abolition of war from the planet, and the peremptory establishment of perpetual universal peace. Their sole argument is that because perpetual universal peace is so obviously desirable, so obviously to the general interest of the nations, therefore some means must be invented to secure it. And a League of Nations is the only means that they can imagine.

That perpetual, universal peace is desirable, nobody questions. But many things are desirable that are far from being possible.

In all future events whose course cannot be precisely foreseen and demonstrated, in all the large maze of the unknown that stretches before us, the masses of mankind believe what is most pleasing to them, what makes them most comfortable for the moment. It is enough

for them that something is desirable; if it cannot be definitely proved to be impossible, it becomes a certainty to them. I once knew a man whose custom it was to spend his Sundays in singing verse of an exceeding poor quality to the accompaniment of a harmonium, and in listening to the exposition of a strange system of theology which I could not comprehend. This pleased him so much, that he thought he should like to spend eternity in the same occupations. I could find no evidence that he would be so employed, but his imagination became so inflamed with this engaging prospect, that he was firmly convinced of its future reality. That it would be a delightful way of spending eternity, was enough to satisfy him that it was a certainty. So the mere desirability of perpetual universal peace, is enough to convince its projectors that it will be attained, and already they begin to tune up their harmoniums.

We are like servant girls who take their little savings to a fortune teller, knowing that for a shilling they can buy a happy future with a fair young man who possesses boundless wealth. Since it cannot be proved that the desirable fair young man is not waiting somewhere about with marriageable intent, why not take him for a certainty, and render the present drudgery more endurable?

What is the likelihood that a League of Nations will fulfil its promise, and marry us to fair young perpetual peace, and make us happy and rich for ever afterwards? Unless the wild forces now let loose all the world over, should presently clash in a blind mad industrial war, we have a tolerably good security for a lengthened peace in the fact that all the nations have exhausted themselves in a cruel and bloody war, leaving them neither

the means nor the energies for further diversions of that kind. Peace is probably assured for a generation whether or not we have a League of Nations. For the present a League of Nations seems to be largely unnecessary, especially if after the war, the nations now allied will enter into an agreement amongst themselves, and publish a clear proclamation of their aims. After victory, the peace of the world will be in their keeping for a generation or two, and it will best be secured by this simple means, and by occasional renewals of an understanding among themselves.

But the projectors of a League of Nations are demanding a permanent compact, whose sanctity they allow, must, in the last resort, be assured by the employment of international troops. Is not this almost certain to provoke dissension and general disruption at some future time? For be it remembered that if a League of Nations is to secure its avowed aim, and be a perpetual barrier against war, one breach in its bulwarks may possibly let in the devouring ocean. One single failure will prove it to be a dangerous futility, a bastion built of pasteboard. Is not the widespread misery and devastation of the present war, largely due to the fact that England for half a century, put up pasteboard bastions to defend her empire?

What are the chances that a League of Nations will be perennially successful in ensuring peace by a mere parade of international troops? For if those international troops are ever employed in actual warfare against the disturber of the peace, what is that but to use the exact means of securing peace which the allied nations are using at this present moment? And if in the commotion that will ensue, the conflicting interests of the nations should happen to shift to a fairly even

balance, may it not finally mean the employment of as large a number of troops as are to-day engaged in enforcing peace by the only means that the nations have yet discovered?

When we assume the permanent success of a League of Nations, what do we build upon? Our first postulate is that the fundamental instincts and passions of mankind will suddenly change upon the signing of the peace; for hitherto all through the past, these instincts and passions have at intervals embroiled the nations in war. Our second postulate is that every nation will in the future be endowed with a wise and clear discernment of its own interests, and that it may be trusted always to pursue these interests with a strict regard to all its neighbours' interests. It would be difficult to find in the past, one nation that has, for any length of time, discerned where its true interests lay, still less pursued them with a strict regard to all its neighbours' interests. With forty-six nations and communities spreading more rapidly than ever over a planet that daily affords them less and less fertile accommodation, we may be sure that their separate individual interests will tend more and more to come into collision. If no one nation can long be trusted to pursue its own interests in harmony with all the conceptions and estimates which its neighbours have formed of their interests, how can forty-six nations be trusted always to pursue their individual interests in harmony with all the varying conceptions and estimates which all their neighbours may happen, as time goes by, to form of their own individual interests?

If we carefully examine the foundations upon which the projectors of a League of Nations are building, we shall find that their corner stone is the assumption

that in the future all the nations will be wise for all of the time. That is the ultimate guarantee of the success of their enterprise. It is rash and dangerous to assume that all the nations will be wise for part of the time. It is even more rash and more dangerous to assume that some of the nations will be wise for all of the time. But to assume that all the nations will be wise for all of the time, is to ascend from the sublime heights of Utopia, to those sublime heights where lunar beams fall full on the naked skulls of fanatics, and moonstruck unreason ranges at its will.

Let us descend to the habitable haunts of common sense. Let us not go bail for the perpetual reasonableness and good behaviour of all the nations of the earth. Let us be sure that in the future, as in the past, there will be many conflicts of interest amongst the peoples, much short sight and carelessness and blundering of politicians in handling them, much muddling blindness in the conduct of every nation's business. Let us hope that mankind will learn many valuable lessons from the war; but let us not, because we have battered down a medieval robber stronghold in Central Europe, assume that therefore all democracies will in the future, guide their relations with all their neighbours from the lofty standpoint of an unselfish regard for all their neighbours' interests.

In the twilight of our present uncertainties, the keenest foresight would hesitate to number or to name the forces that are stealthily gathering in the ambushes of the future. What are those dark forms moving dimly across the horizon yonder—just there, where the mirage of the millennium throws up its faint ineffectual haze—gesticulating wildly, with confused anarchic cries, and goading themselves into action? Who can

foretell the groupings and cleavages and dispositions of the peoples? Let us avert our eyes, and make haste to frame a League of Nations.

Seeing that it is very desirable, and not wholly impossible, that wars should cease from the moment that this war is ended, let us accept it for a fact. War being an intolerable nuisance and a great hindrance to business, let us away with it, and manage international affairs by a Committee.

The prospect is not reassuring. In Committees that deal with complex and thorny matters, it is not justice and good sense that usually prevail, but time-serving compromises, and temporary unstable adjustments of finally irreconcilable interests, jealousies, and whimsies. The distilled essence of all the wisdom there is amongst the separate members of a Committee, often drains out from them as a compound of folly.

Still, let us grant that when international affairs are managed by a Committee of the League of Nations, justice and good sense will contrive to keep the upper hand perpetually. Let us assume that the Committee will be always wise and always honest, and that they will succeed in persuading the Nations they represent to be always wise and always honest in pursuit of their individual interests. No force will then ever need to be used, and war will be banished from our planet.

What does that signify?

The instinct of self-preservation in every people, the fear of being pushed or stamped out, the hunger for national life and for yet more national life, the desire of mastery, the pride of place—all these primary, ineradicable impulses will still be at work all the world over, and no longer finding their outlet in war, will find it in an incessant, fierce, and bitter economic strug-

gle. Let us not dream that when we cease from war, we shall cease from fighting. The competition in armaments will be metamorphosed into a competition amongst all the impoverished nations for the means of life, and for the sources of nourishment and comfort. Already the smell of that battle is in the air, and tariff constructors in all countries are pawing their hoofs, and champing their bridles to charge at the enemy.

Will that new war upon which we shall enter as soon as the last cannon shot is fired in this, be so rich with spiritual issues, and bring home to mankind so large a spiritual victory as this present conflict? With all its unimaginable count of sufferings, horrors, defilements, and slaughters, this war will yet leave to humanity an entailed legacy of supreme accomplishment, of unflinching fortitudes and heroisms immeasurable; of reckless, stupendous self-sacrifices, and of indomitable resolution in the achievement of the noblest ends. Can we hope that the coming commercial war will bring to its combatants, any such purging and regeneration of their natures, any such kindling inspiration to live and to die at the highest pitch of unselfish endeavour, and to win the heavenly prize for unrecorded, unrewarded devotion to duty?

Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war, but their winning does not stir and sting our souls to their finest responses, or nerve great multitudes to endure agony and martyrdom in deadly wrestle with the powers of darkness, or leave the hearts of men tingling with exultant remembrance of conquest over enthroned and fortified evil. Victories of peace bring provender and comfort and happiness to mankind, but victories in righteous war sow rich lattermaths of spiritual satisfaction, and harvests of spiritual profit. We justly

honour the statesmen who negotiate for us a wise commercial treaty, or ease our financial burdens by sound national economy; but we never pay them the adoring homage that we render to the three mighty men who brake through the host of the Philistines to bring a cup of water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem; or to the common soldier who crawls out in a hail of fire and willingly offers his life to save a wounded comrade. That broken, bandaged wreck of humanity in blue flannel, who sits and warms himself in the sun on yonder bench, his crutches by his side, his strength and lustihood left in the Flanders trenches, his flaming youth quenched into apathy and listless surrender, his manhood cheated of the bustle of glad vigorous toil, and the joys and caresses of home, his hopes subdued within the narrow compass of a cripple's aims and efforts, a looker-on at life for all his long, helpless years—that shattered blue pensioner has in his heart the source of a sacred pride, an enviable boast and solace of supreme service rendered to his fellows, of duty done in defiance of death and hell, that no busy workman, or useful clerk, or prosperous tradesman, or industrial magnate will ever win for himself in the warfare of commerce. For he gave his all for his fellows, and his wages are mutilation, and a pittance, and frustrated, lonely helplessness.

It is a sure and true instinct that marks the man who defends his country, and not merely for admiration and honour, but for admiration and honour of a peculiar kind that we give to no other man. The soldier fights for others; the hardships are for him and the benefits are for others. But in commercial warfare, each man fights for himself; the hardships are often for others and the benefits chiefly for himself.

If, then, in the future, war is banished from the planet, and men's primal ineradicable instincts of rivalry, aggression, and dominance find their fierce play no longer in the battlefield, but in the factory, the shop, and the counting-house, will it be wholly for the advancement of mankind? Closing our eyes to the threatening signs of an interregnum of widespread social anarchy, which may possibly follow the present war, we are preparing ourselves for a long era of hard, commercial strain, and economic conflict.

How will the graces and virtues of the spirit, the valours and sanctities of the soul, the ornaments and elegancies of the mind, fare in the hustle and juggle and scrimmage of world-wide, universal, commercial war?

I have known much of English commercial life. I have some knowledge and experience of American commercial methods and practices. These nations may justly claim that, as human nature is constituted, they compare very favourably with most other nations. There is certainly a greater proportion of righteous men in London and in New York, than would have saved Sodom from destruction. But commercial life everywhere seems to be necessarily leavened with baseness, dishonesty, greed, and cunning selfishness. Can we contemplate, with any satisfaction, the perpetual dedication of the greater part of mankind to industrialism and commercialism, human life everywhere becoming more mechanical, more uniformly prosperous and banal and smug, dwarfed down to standards of material comfort and competence? The spirit of man loses its finest impulses, loses its wings if it stays too long in the warm nest of material prosperity. On both sides of the Atlantic, amongst men of high repute and great com-

mercial standing, I have known trade dealings and daily practices so abhorrently mean and dishonest, that rather than put my son to fight for his livelihood with such weapons, I would thrust him into the deadliest forefront of our battle line, and think I had acted well by him. Those fathers who in future years will send their sons into that fierce economic battle with all its ignoble evils and chicaneries, will show no cause for envy to him, who, having in his heart the consecrated remembrance of a son fallen in Flanders, can say with old Siward:

God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sons as I have hairs!

I could not wish them to a fairer death.

Is there not some reason for the suspicion men have always had, that a prolonged peace inevitably tends to corruption, lethargy, internal mischief, and fatty degeneration of the peoples? Is not that suspicion verified by the condition of England before the war? Let us suppose that the nations now settle into a long amity and fruitful friendship of labour for each other's good; that natural resources are everywhere developed; that gradually the losses and impoverishments of the war are made good; that the waste places of the earth are sown with abundant harvests; that large cities spring up in every land, with increasing populations and accumulations of wealth; that our now empty exchequers are filled to overflowing; that in the meantime all provocations to war have been successfully parried by the League of Nations; that all national jealousies have been quelled, all national antipathies allayed, all discordant national ambitions renounced, all conflicting national interests sacrificed for the common welfare. Some such ultimate condition of affairs on the surface

of the planet, is what the projectors of a League of Nations must have in their mind, so far as they are not weltering in confused amiability, and do really know and understand what they are aiming at, and what they propose to achieve. I do not say that such a general condition of affairs will ever be possible. I do say that it is the only general condition of affairs which an advocate of a League of Nations can conceive, or can desire, as the final and successful outcome of his plan. If that is not what he is working for, aiming at, proposing to achieve, what general condition of affairs does he set before himself as likely to be ultimately established by the operations of a League of Nations?

Let us place ourselves in the distant future and imagine that this seductive forecast is already fulfilled, that the League of Nations has accomplished all that its founders hoped and proposed. It needs great hardihood of faith in lucky chance, and still greater hardihood of faith in the constant and universal wisdom of mankind, to suppose that such a general condition of human affairs will be realised without war amongst the nations. It needs much hardihood of faith to suppose it will be realized without war between classes. And surely, if it is desirable to prevent bloodshed between nations, it is equally desirable to prevent bloodshed between classes. Since, however, the League of Nations does not concern itself with the possible super-vention of a widespread class war, let us for the time leave it out of our calculations.

Let us suppose that the League of Nations, throughout a long lapse of years and many generations, has fulfilled the most ardent desires of its promoters. The covetings and passions of the forty-six nations have been ruled out of order by the decisions of our Committee.

Wars have ceased. Armaments have gradually fallen into disuse. Weapons of destruction are no longer manufactured. The last great war in the early twentieth century has become a mere dusty storehouse for historians and romancers. Under the long reign of peace, and aided by science and mechanics, mankind have increased and multiplied at an ever-swiftening rate, until they have occupied all the fertile spaces of the earth, from the sands of the Tropics to the ice fringes of the Poles. Old nations have dwindled and perished; new nations and races have arisen and multiplied. And meantime, terrified by the past awful example of this present war, the turbulent new young races have meekly trodden the paths of peace, obedient to the rulings of our Committee, who have nicely accommodated and smoothed away every difficulty, every animosity, every aggression, every threat of disruption as it arose.

But owing to the continued prosperity and abundance brought about by perpetual peace, the earth has become inconveniently and dangerously over-populated. Unfortunately, the various peoples have kept on breeding; and the new younger races have been breeding much faster than the older ones. These vigorous upstarts have been growing more and more dissatisfied with the stretches of territory, the privileges, and the opportunities for expansion allotted to them by our Committee. They have long been a gathering threat to the peaceful economy of the world, established by the League of Nations—these fast multiplying parvenus with odious practices in morals, and complexions equally objectionable. For in a world once and for all made safe for democracy, Nature, having none of our prejudices against a shady complexion, has allowed and

encouraged an altogether disproportionate increase of these swarthy, unscrupulous breeders. Hitherto they have been kept in awe by the sage admonitions and decisions of our Committee, and by the tradition, handed down from the early twentieth century, that war is a cruel and horrible process, and that its weapons are so dangerous and destructive that it is inadvisable to meddle with them. Under a system of universal Popular Education, even more generous and illuminating than the one you have so successfully inaugurated, these young races have possessed themselves of all the discoveries of science. Their growing ambitions, their pride of adolescent strength, their consciousness of power, their desire of mastery over the older nations, their sense of not being allotted their proper place in the world—all these ineradicable human instincts and passions have long been unbearably suppressed and contained. And the world is over-populated, and all its desirable and habitable territory is occupied.

Can anyone imagine a general condition of affairs more ripe and certain to lead to a world-wide devastating war? Yet some such general condition of affairs must be the inevitable result of a League of Nations, if its operations are continuously successful. Nor can its advocates indicate any definite possible alternative, without postulating that the fundamental instincts and passions of humanity will change, and that man will become a creature of so different a nature from ourselves that no prognosis can be made about him.

Again, I do not assert or believe that humanity will ever arrive at such a general condition of affairs. But an onus lies upon the projectors of the League of Nations to tell us what other developments are possible, what other goal they expect to reach, and, when they

reach that goal, what agency is to intervene and prevent the successful working of their machine from leading to a malignant outburst of the very evil it was designed to abolish.

I do not suppose that there is any believer in the efficacy of a League of Nations who will not acknowledge that long before the world has arrived at that condition of affairs I have indicated, the League will be dissolved or superseded.

By what, but by war?

Is it imagined that some even more binding and enduring safeguard will be discovered to secure universal perpetual peace? What league, or compact, or safeguard can be conceived that does not rest upon the assumption that all the nations will be wise for all of the time, and that they will all show a perpetual lofty regard for all their neighbours' interests, and a perpetual readiness for self-abnegation? Nothing that we know of the history of mankind in the past, nothing that we can observe of the nature and motives of mankind in the present, nothing that we can reasonably hope of mankind in the future, warrants us in putting trust in any such shaky security. Probably the advocates of a League of Nations, if they can be summoned from the cloudy mountain-tops of amiable generalities and benevolent aspirations, will admit as much. Then they admit that their scheme is merely tentative, experimental, temporary; a passerelle that will not bear the continuous weight of the world's lumbering heavy traffic, but will break down whenever too great a strain is put upon its fragile supports. It may not break down for generations. Is there any assurance that it may not break down within five years? After our victory, when peace is signed, will the world's forces be in such a

state of stable equilibrium, that there will be no danger of some fresh outbreak of war? Everything promises fair for a long reign of peace, if the enormous difficulties of the settlement can be successfully negotiated. But, granted that some tolerable general accommodation is secured, can we be certain that it will endure for any great length of time, and that all international concord may not soon be broken and rent by class divisions and warfare? This tempest will not subside without leaving a tremendous ground-swell, and clashing, baffling cross-currents that no man can divine. Will the strongest advocate of a League of Nations guarantee for it any stability, amidst the clash of the world forces that will meet round its cradle?

The one thing of sovereign surety for us to note, and to keep in mind as a guide and director of our permanent national policy, is that the longer a League of Nations works successfully, the nearer it leads us to the approach of war. For by its very operation, it tends to bring about a state of prosperity amongst the most advanced nations, a period of temporary adjustments and compromises amongst finally irreconcilable interests, and an over-reaching surplus of population, that are of themselves the surest provocations to war.

This law of balancing alternations of peace and war can be traced through all past history, though its incidence has often been obscured by the ambitions and decrees of kings, and the mistakes and follies of statesmen. May we not claim that the present war is one of its alternations? For though the German Emperor may be the last monarch who will strut and crow and bluster out blasphemy to inflame his people to their destruction, the German nation will not be the last nation to demand a larger place in the sun than their

neighbours will allow them. We may feel reasonably confident that this law of balancing alternations of peace and war will be operative in the future, as it has been in the past, though its periods may be more within the control of our foresight. But no foresight can finally avert its operation, seeing that it is the necessary result of the permanent fundamental instincts of mankind in constant struggle with the permanent conditions of life.

This law is in perpetual operation over all the spaces of the earth, and chiefly in those areas that are most thickly populated and congested. By recognizing its necessity and preparing for its incidence, nations may avoid the worst evils of its recurring vicissitudes. By denying it, and seeking to elude its operation, as we did in the generation before the war, nations do but bring themselves all the more surely and terribly under its rigours. For it mocks at such phrases as "making the world safe for democracy," and tosses them into the limbo of futilities, and self-deceptions, and fallacious generalities.

Nor, supposing that we could split up the peoples and segregate them in classes instead of in nations, should we defeat or long arrest the operation of this law. Indeed, there is every indication that the division of the world into classes, if it could be stabilized, would put supreme power into the hands of men less wise, less regardful of the rights of others, more greedy of authority, more unscrupulous in using it, more shortsighted, and more likely to bring about frequent and bloody intermissions of the world's peace, than the potentates and politicians who have hitherto ruled or misruled the nations. In their pursuit of the phantom of equality, men may yet bring upon themselves suffer-

ings and horrors as great as any they are now enduring. While if perfect equality could be attained for one single moment, that moment could be the starting point of the cruelest universal war the world has ever known. Unless, indeed, all the fundamental instincts and passions of mankind had been exterminated in the process of reaching equality. In that event, the prospect before dehumanized and sterilized mankind would be a state of incessant mechanical monotonous toil, for a race of beings as stereotyped into uniformity as the inmates of a beehive, and with no higher functions, or ambitions, or hopes, or varieties of interest.

The combative instincts of our race will always prevent us from reaching anything that approaches to a state of equality. And these combative instincts will always find their exercise alternately in a war of commerce, and in a war of arms. The longer the nations dance round and round the mulberry bush of perpetual peace, the more likely they are to tumble back headlong into the slough of war that lies just outside their careless circle. The final responsible custodian of peace will never be the international lawyer, the politician, the preacher, the humanitarian, or the policeman, but always the soldiers.

This need not prevent us from doing all we can to postpone the intervention of the soldier till the latest moment, to dispense with his services whenever it is possible, to make his visits as rare and brief and humane as may be, and to give him his earliest dismissal when his work is done. To recognize that war may be an occasional necessity, is not to acclaim it as a blessing, or to sanctify it as an idol. The surest way to avoid the worst evils and horrors of war, is to be aware when they are lurking in our path, and to be vigilantly

prepared to meet them. Let us do everything in our power to promote good will and good understanding amongst the peoples, and to subdue international rivalries and aggressions. But if we carefully study the profiles and facial angles of the various peoples of the earth, beginning with our daily companions in the motor-buses and tubes, we shall be driven to the sad and humble confession that man has not yet advanced much more than half-way on his progress from the anthropoid to the angel, and that probably much tough miscellaneous fighting, both bodily and spiritual, lies before him in his ascending path.

The immediate danger of a League of Nations is that it will give Germany constant opportunities to intrigue and stir up dissensions within it.

Why this constant distrust and suspicion of Germany? Are we not assured that the moment peace is signed, the Ethiopian will change his skin, and the leopard his spots, and that Germany will straightway tear out all the rooted fibres of cunning, aggression, and cruel ambition that are her dear heart-strings, and that are twined round all the nerves and muscles of her national being? Why, then, when we are about to enter upon a long and bitter economic war with her, and when she has already devised new schemes of commercial frightfulness to be employed against us—why not seize this new chance of hoodwinking ourselves, as we did at the beginning of the present war, and give her a free hand to pursue her economic policy to our disadvantage and disaster?

Not by a League of Nations, with its unstable constitution offering continual opportunities for any dissatisfied nation to stir up strife, but by a firm compact between the Allies now fighting to redeem civiliza-

tion, and by a simple unequivocal declaration of their aims, will a lengthened world-peace be most likely to ensue.

The remote, but very real and permanent, danger of a League of Nations is that the longer it works successfully, the more the peoples will nurse the delusion that they are protected from all danger of war by an automatic machine, and will be lulled again into the same false security from which we have just been so rudely awakened. Will not some distant future time arrive when again the nations will be fat regorged with comfort and prosperity, while in the gathering clouds above them, black Hecate sits singing to her sisters the same song she was singing over us five years ago—

For you all know, security
Is mortal's chiefest enemy.

If we could convey ourselves to A.D. 6920, and, looking backward, see spread out before us the map of the world's history for the past ten thousand years, all woven into one continuous whole, should we find that while the first five thousand years up to 1920 were sprinkled red all over with bloodstains of the jarring nations, the last five thousand years were one long white roll of unstained perpetual peace? Should we find that the same breed of human kind, with the same passions and instincts, and living under the same permanent natural laws that provoke them to constant rivalry and strife—that this same breed of men, who had scarcely allowed one of the first five thousand years to pass without some rupture of peace, suddenly on a certain date about 1920 renounced all their ancestral impulses and habits, reversed all the momentum of the past, threw up their weapons, placed themselves under

the guidance of a Committee, and passed the last five thousand years without any embroilment of war? If there is any advocate of a League of Nations who believes that human affairs will take such a course in the next five thousand years, in the next five hundred, I entreat him to read a suggestive pamphlet by an anonymous author, called "The Folly of having Opinions—a Perennial Caution to Mankind." This thoughtful little brochure should be in everybody's hands. I am told it is to be read aloud at the opening of the next Church Congress.

That the years 1914-1920 will be a dividing line between two definitely marked periods of human history, and perhaps between two widely differing kinds of civilization, we have reason to believe. It is even conceivable that the events of these years will ultimately work such beneficial changes in human thought and action, and in the conditions of living, that some future philosopher may claim that, on the whole, the war brought a balance of good to mankind. But no surveyor of these years in the distant future will find that the continuity of human history was then severed as by scissors, cutting off all the threads of national passions, ambitions, and rivalries that in former times wove themselves into the dreadful pattern of war, and leaving them for all time to come hanging loose in the void.

If we look into the dark backward and abysm of time so far as eyes can reach, we see that war has intermittently arisen in every habitable tract of the earth, from the Equator to the Arctic snows. It has intermittently arisen amongst every nation and race. It has intermittently arisen in every phase of every succeeding civilization—amongst the lowest savages, and

amongst the peoples who have reached the highest levels of literature and art and luxury. It has intermittently arisen under all the varying forms of religion.

Vast regions of the earth have been changed from swamp and desert and forest, into plains of fruitful cultivation and busy streets of commerce and industry, and have passed again into desolate wastes and haunts of lizards and creeping things. War has been the hand-maiden of both changes. Scattered tribes in caves and huts, have grown into powerful nations in populous cities, holding half the world in fee, and have dwindled into poverty and impotence and decay. War welded them into unity and gave them the sceptre of dominion; war snatched that sceptre from their hands, shattered their pride, and gave their heritage to their foes. Countless civilizations have sprung up through all the ages in all quarters of the globe, differing strangely in laws and customs and manners, and in their forms of literature and art. War has largely framed their codes, and laid the corner stones of their institutions. War has always been busy inspiring literature, designing fashion in dress, giving laws to architecture. War has jogged the cradle of every civilization, and pushed it into its grave. A thousand forms of religion have in their turn held sway over the spirit of man, from the crudest superstition to the latest refinements of Neo-Christianity. War has alternately been the protector and the destroyer of each of them, sometimes its imperious master, more often its ready servant. The priests of every creed have blessed their country's banners, and preached their crusades.

That is what we see when we look into the dark backward and abysm of time.

If we could look into the dark forward and abysm of

time, should we see a sudden disappearance from all human affairs, of this compulsive giant who has hitherto been active in them all, and has penetrated and informed every nation, every social fabric, every civilization, every creed, through every generation that has lived under the sun? Should we see an abrupt stoppage at A.D. 1920, of all the natural forces that have hitherto swept the peoples of the earth into conflict with each other after the lapse of every few years? Should we see the fountains of the great deep of national rivalries, and enmities, and ambitions securely dammed up by the word of man, their Pontic rush and flow arrested, the flood of their waters standing like a wall, as the waters of the Red Sea stood at the command of Moses?

Is it probable? Is it credible? Does anyone claim that this is what will happen after 1920? He is not in communion with facts. He is in communion with his whimsies. He is living in a world where action does not call forth reaction.

The framers of a League of Nations may stand upon the beach, and bid the main flood bate his usual height. Canute issued a command to the same effect, and if he had chosen the moment of an ebbing tide, there is every reason to believe that the sea would have obeyed him. The framers of a League of Nations are likely to be more fortunate. They will be calling upon an ebbing tide to recede, and they will doubtless have the satisfaction of seeing the angry waves subside at their bidding. But when the flood tide shall return, will they fare any better than the other children who build their castles on the sands?

Nations rarely go to war because they desire to go to war. There is always an almost universal prepos-

session in favour of peace. War insinuates itself; it lies in wait for the nations, and ere ever they are aware of it, they are sucked into its whirlpool. The advocates of a League of Nations perceive this, and propose to set a trap for War, as for some outside, visible, tangible enemy; not knowing that he is lurking in their own hearts all the while, and that his instruments are not guns and bombs, but the abiding envies and greeds and selfish instincts of mankind.

Could any nation be more resolutely pacific than was America at the outbreak of the war? The prevailing opinion was that the peoples of Europe had gone mad. Clearly the only thing that sane America could do was to wonder and shudder at the crazy, bloody spectacle; to feel thankful to be out of it; and to stand aside till a chance came to mediate. No other rôle seemed possible to Americans.

But events they had not willed or foreseen, beckoned them to come and take their part. They protested. They refused. It shocked all their stock habits of national thought; it violated all their standards of national conduct; it mocked at all their cherished national ideals. They would have none of it.

The summoning, clamouring war trumpets of Europe blared out another furious call. They roused American mothers to a counterblast. With abounding maternal emotion, but with grievous poverty of lyrical impulse, they chanted back to the war trumpets:

I did not raise my darling boy to be a soldier;
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.
I will not let him wear a musket on his shoulder,
To kill some other mother's darling boy.

So sang the American mothers two years ago, hugging their darling boys to their bosoms. But He that had

the steerage of their course, caught them in His fist, blew His strong breath, and filled their sails, and wafted them to France, there to fulfil the destiny that He, and not their mothers, had chosen for them. Nor will any American mother whose son is gathered amongst the first fruits of her country's valour, in that richest vintage those vineyards have ever known, esteem him any the less her pride and joy, because he found in the valley of the Marne a safer and more sacred resting-place than in her arms.

How strangely different is the gigantic part which America is playing in this stupendous drama, from the very modest rôle which she proposed to herself, of witness to the peace treaty in the last act! Yet there were voices that called upon her to prepare for some such destiny, and warned her that not in vowed seclusion from the enmities and conflicts of mankind, does a nation find either material security or spiritual advancement.

For the past century, Americans have had a huge fertile continent with boundless undeveloped resources. And all through this century, science and mechanical inventions have enormously eased and smoothed the conditions of living. Americans have never been crowded into narrow spaces with greedy competitors. They have never needed to covet territory from their neighbours, because they have always had more of their own than they could occupy. Never has a nation lived for so long a time in circumstances so favourable to peace, so little provocative to war. Is it any wonder then, that with little actual experience of war, with continued prosperity, and with wide spaces of elbow-room giving all their national energies free scope, Americans confirmed themselves in the notion that

peace is the natural perennial condition of mankind, and that all that is necessary to abolish war from the planet, is that men should get sensible ideas on the subject. To the same long lack of actual experience of war on our own soil, may be traced the rankest growths of pacifism in England.

In all the past, no nation has gained any enviable or conspicuous place on the earth's surface, and established itself in some sort of security, except by means of war. No nation has risen to influence and power, or to any high degree of civilization, without conquering some of its neighbours, and absorbing them in its own population. Nations have not improved their material and spiritual conditions, and advanced in the arts of life, by merely remaining within their own borders and multiplying amongst themselves. It is true that they have grown and progressed in the intervals of peace, but it has been by means of the already accomplished subjection of other races, whom they have compelled to mingle and multiply with them, and make one composite people. When a nation has stayed within its own borders and merely multiplied, it has not advanced in civilization. It has settled down to intellectual and spiritual stagnancy and decrepitude, as in China.

By a lucky accident, that will never happen again to any people, Americans tumbled into the inheritance of a vast, unclaimed continent, where every condition seemed favourable for perpetual peace. But before they could be masters in it, they had to fight England; before they could possess it, they had to subjugate and wellnigh exterminate the Indians; before they could establish themselves as a great power, free to work out their own ideals, they had to wage a long and bitter war amongst themselves. And to-day, America, the

home and dedicated sanctuary of peace, is one huge workshop of war, throughout the length and breadth of her continent. Her armies and navies have become the pivots of our defence, and the guardians of European civilization. Against her most steadfast purpose declared for generations, against all her power of self-determination, has this change been wrought.

What more teasing, fascinating employment can imagination find than to guess what new astounding part America may play amongst the nations, when they gather themselves after this war, broken and tattered and beggared, and begin to lay the foundations of a new civilization on this wreckage of the old world? How often in past years have I watched and wondered, and sometimes shuddered a little, at that vast uncouth fabric of mechanical and material prosperity, raising itself towards heaven by means of forty-storied skyscrapers that dwarf into contempt the less conspicuous and less consecrated spires of one or two churches cowering in mean obscurity beneath them!

If the war will work surprising changes in European civilization, will it not work even more surprising changes in the younger and more plastic civilization of America? Will it not break many of the ordinary moulds of American thought, give the nation new measures of spiritual values, and set its face towards a new spiritual horizon? The impetus of magnanimous endeavour and generous sacrifice in this conflict, will not cease when that conflict ends, but will carry America into the forefront of all great world movements from this time onwards. She has been finally called to a destiny quite other than that she had chosen for herself. Will not her future destiny be as strangely unlike, as widely away from what her statesmen announce and

design for her to-day, as her present destiny is strangely unlike and widely away from the peaceful isolation that her statesmen announced and designed for her a few years ago? Answer, prophetic soul of the wide world dreaming on things to come!

When all this litter of fire and death is cleared away, will America again refurnish her home throughout as the sanctuary of perpetual peace, and persuade all the other nations to do likewise? The nations will need but little persuasion. Amidst their smoking ruins, they will eagerly put faith in any scheme that promises to insure them against a future conflagration. Doubtless, for a long immediate future, no nation will be foolish enough to carry a lighted torch amongst the ever-smouldering passions and jealousies and ambitions of its neighbours.

But if we examine the arguments in favour of a League of Nations, we find that its advocates for the most part ignore all the difficulties of constituting it, and the yet greater and ever-increasing difficulties of working it. If they admit these difficulties, they offer no solution of them, and are content with some vague hope or assertion that they may or will be overcome. The sole reason that they give for forming their League is that it is eminently desirable. So desirable does it seem to them that, by hook or by crook, it must be made practicable. And the sole security that they can offer for its lengthened success is their opinion that the rivalries, ambitions, and enmities of all the peoples and races—those combative instincts and passions of mankind which, in all times past, have been the catabolic forces in the world's economy, and which are now in a period of great activity—will, as soon as this war is over, die down, and be absorbed in an amiable inter-

nationalism. That is to say, that the governing processes of civilization will, in the future, be merely anabolic.

We are evidently being swept towards a new form of civilization. What that civilization may be like in its main moral and spiritual aspects, I do not pretend to know. None of the many vanished civilizations that have flourished on this planet, has taken its general form from a design previously worked out by the brain of man. Speaking broadly, they have arisen, as it were, spontaneously, haphazardly. The rushing, clashing, many-coloured, many-shaped interests and aims of neighbouring nations have been shaken up in the kaleidoscope, and a certain pattern of civilization has resulted. In all of these transformations, the desire or necessity of conquest by one or several of the nations, has been the leading conspicuous source of movement. The conscious aims and strivings of the nations have helped to form the pattern of civilization, but that pattern, as a whole, has been something quite different from what any statesman has planned, or any philosopher has prescribed.

Nor will the civilization of the future be fashioned according to any of the designs which we are now submitting to the Eternal, as being what is obviously most desirable for mankind at the present juncture. Greatly as we are concerned, we shall not be taken into His counsels on the matter, nor will He give heed to our valuable hints and suggestions. I care not much at any time whether I use the symbols of religion or the terms of science. The symbols of religion are often less laboriously inaccurate than the strict definitions of science, and throw larger, bolder shadows of incommensurable truths.

Having probably made some slight advance upwards from monkeyhood in the course of the present civilization, and having assuredly gained an ever-increasing command of natural forces, we shall doubtless be allowed a greater apparent liberty of action within the confines of the approaching civilization. Being able to read a little further in Nature's infinite book of secrecy, we shall develop a larger measure of our old illusion that we are part authors of it. But the framework and design of that future civilization will be none of our choosing. They will be imposed upon us, and will be largely unforeseen by us.

That future civilization will probably be, in many respects, a higher civilization than any the world has yet known. But this is by no means certain. At the present moment it promises to be a harder, drabber, more material, less spiritual civilization; less rich in beauty; robbed of many of the graces and charms of the past; robbed of leisure and distinction and ornament; a civilization where the artist will be murdered by the mechanic. This may be only a transitory threat, but unless we take care, we shall make this world a very dull place to live in. Who would not rather live in the London of Dickens than in one of the two hundred and fifty thousand model houses which the Government is proposing to build—that is, if the new Education Act can release a sufficient number of stout young masons and carpenters from the urgent necessity of learning all about Cicero.

To return. Whatever form and complexion the approaching civilization may take, we may be quite sure that we shall soon find it to be something quite different in many of its larger aspects and tendencies, from anything that we may now consciously design, or ami-

ably desire. At present, under the stress of the illimitable miseries and horrors of this war, we design to mould our future civilization on a basis of perpetual universal concord guaranteed by a League of Nations. It is assumed that by this compact wars can be made to cease, and that this condition of things will be static, and will be unassailable by all the imperious wash and sway and flux of human affairs outside.

It is clear that if our future civilization is to be founded on this basis, it can have no permanence and can give us no security and prosperity, unless as a matter of fact, wars do cease from this time.

There are four general states of world civilization, either of which is possible, and one of which must be realized, during that period of the future which we are concerned to anticipate, and to prepare for, by shaping our national policy in accordance with it.

(1) A state of world-civilization in which war is wholly abolished from this time.

(2) A state of world-civilization in which war arises over small areas, with diminishing frequency, and with diminishing violence, until at no distant date it dies out from sheer inanition, because the passions and instincts of mankind that formerly provoked it, have also died out in the meantime. That is to say, all the nations will not only have *resolved* to be wise for all of the time, but will have *kept* their resolution, and will have veritably and demonstrably attained beatitude in this respect.

These two states of civilization have some kinship, and the national policy and general legislation that will be suitable to one of them, will in some measure be suitable to the other.

(3) A state of world-civilization in which war arises,

with diminishing frequency, but over large areas, and with increasing violence, owing to the long restraint and suppression of those fundamental instincts and passions of mankind which provoke it, and the consequent accumulation of inflammable materials, both in the hearts of men, and in their political and economical surroundings.

(4) A state of world-civilization, which, however different it may be in its outer garb and manifestations from our present and all preceding civilizations, is yet virtually the same in respect of its fairly constant alternations of peace and war, due to the fact that the fundamental instincts and passions of mankind have not changed, but continue to find the same outlet that they have found in all the past experience of our race. These two latter states of civilization are nearly akin, and are scarcely distinguishable from each other. The national policy and general legislation that will be suitable to one of them will be mainly suitable to the other.

Except these four, no general state of world civilization is possible, or even conceivable. One of these four states must issue from our present situation. To meet the demands and exigencies of one of these four general states, the statesmen of each of the nations must begin to shape their foreign policy as soon as this war is ended. Which of these four states is most likely to issue from our existing circumstances?

Judging from all past history, and from the instincts and passions of mankind as they are at this moment displaying themselves, does it not seem improbable in the highest degree that the first of these states of world civilization will be realized? Is it not almost as im-

probable that the second of these states will be realized in any period of time that concerns us?

But, putting aside all estimates of the future that are founded upon experience of the past, and upon our knowledge of human nature, let us ask what will be the actual condition of the world's affairs after the war. The merest glance shows us that the whole surface of the planet will be littered with combustible matter. Apart altogether from the war, all the world's social forces are in disorder. Capital and labour, national and international finance, economic systems and tariffs, the relation of the sexes, the allotment and exercise of political power, the authority of religion, the status of the coloured races—every one of these world social forces is in a state of treacherous and perilous inflammability. Every one of them is a possible cause of war, or a possible auxiliary cause of war; one or two of them have provoked wars in the past, and seem likely to cause more or less bloodshed in the future. Before a peaceful path can be assured for world civilization, every one of them must be adjusted and controlled, and brought to some sort of an agreement. Is it likely that all these vexed questions will be permanently settled by referring them to national and international committees? All otherwise to me my thoughts portend.

If we will but forsake our whimsies, and look steadily at the facts that are before our eyes, do they offer us any security that from this time, or within any measurable stretch of the future, the first or second states of general world-civilization will be realized, and that war will be finally abolished from the earth? Does not a survey of the main facts and tendencies, and of

the social conditions prevailing in every country, press upon us the same conclusion that has been forced upon us by our experience of all the past, and by our knowledge of human nature as it has always manifested itself, and as it is manifesting itself to-day?

If he would be a bold and foolish man who should affirm that it is utterly impossible for wars to cease from this time, unlikely and incredible as that seems, how crazy beyond all dreamers in Bedlam, would that man be who, with all these facts and considerations before him, should affirm that war will never again break out upon this planet! Is it not enormously probable that, however much we may be able to guide the shape of that world civilization which we are approaching, it will be some form of either the third or the fourth of those that I have enumerated; that is to say, it will be one in which war will be liable to break out at any time, and will be sure to break out at some time or the other?

A great weight of public opinion is demanding that our national policy shall be shaped upon the assumption that the future world-civilization will be either the first or the second of the states I have enumerated, and that war will be entirely abolished either from this time, or within some easily measurable compass of years.

And the permanency of this wholly pacific state of world-civilization is to be assured by the contrivances and decrees of a League of Nations. We have no experience of the working of such a tribunal, except such as we may have gained from the disastrous failure of the Hague Conference to prevent this war, and from the ominous fact that it tied our hands and tripped our feet in the early stages of the conflict. All the promoters of a League of Nations allow that its constitu-

tion is beset with enormous difficulties, and none of them can offer us any better assurance for its successful working than what is afforded by the hope of constant international amiability and wisdom. Will it be safe, will it be prudent, to hang the whole weight of our great destiny on the slender thread of security that a League of Nations will be able to prevent war in the future? This is what we are asked to do by a powerful and gathering force of public opinion.

If we are not again to drift aimlessly on confused and contrary tides of events, making risky accommodations and compromises with inexorable forces; if we are not again to put our trust in chance to pull us through, we are called upon this day to shape and declare a firm, clear, national policy, either in accordance with the belief that war will be extinct or negligible in the future world-civilization, or on the other hand in the belief war will be liable to recur with something of the same frequency and violence in the future as it has done in the past. If we shape our national policy in accordance with the former of these alternative beliefs, that policy will tend towards an Internationalism which will gradually break down the highly complicated structure of laws, habits, customs, institutions, and common national interests that now holds us together in unity, as a living social organism amongst other social organisms. If we shape our national policy in accordance with the latter of these alternative beliefs, that policy will tend towards a Patriotism which will harden and confirm and strengthen our highly complicated structure of laws, habits, customs, institutions, and common national interests, and will render it capable of further growth and development. No clear, resolute, effective national policy can be imagined unless it accepts, and acts upon,

one or the other of these alternative beliefs, and is shaped and pursued towards one or the other of these alternative ends.

After much groping and wandering in tangled ways, with the hope of finding and beating a plain sure path for coming footsteps to tread, we emerge from our obscurities and perplexities, and stand in clear open ground on the top of the hill. There, plain in front of us, are the two signposts, bearing their inscriptions in the largest, boldest letters, so that every wayfarer may read. They point and urge our nation in opposite directions. On the one is written, "To Internationalism." On the other is written "To Patriotism."

CHAPTER V

(*Sept.—Oct.—Nov. 1918*)

PATRIOTISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

Apology to the Minister of Education for continuing to address him—The neglected Hampstead missionary—Aims of Internationalism before the war—No danger of war—The good Scheide-mann would prevent it—The Great Illusionist—The meddling old warrior—Our sagacious internuncio—Crash! The war comes—What shall we do with our opinions now?—Socialists' forecasts falsified—They forsake their comrades and their whimsies to defend their country—Patriotism, a compulsive universal instinct—Compared with the maternal and religious instincts—Incipient Patriotism at East and West Gawkhām—Engrafted Patriotism—"Reconstruction" a misleading term—Nations cannot be "reconstructed"—Internationalists ignore this—The parable of the old township and Mr. Fervent Impossibilist—The general aim and design of Internationalists and Socialists—Who are the real enemies of the working classes of each nation?—Internationalism strikes athwart all social structure—Internationalists and Bolshevism—Mr. H. G. Wells gets a grip on Bolshevism and interprets it to us—Mr. Wells gets a grip on the situation in Russia—Mr. Wells gets a grip on the situation in Africa—Mr. Wells, like Sangrado, has a panacea—Mr. Wells allows the British flag to wave and sometimes to flap—Examination of Mr. Wells' African constitution—Mr. Wells threatens the Solomon Islands—Mr. Wells prophesies delightfully about machines—Goes on to prophesy about mankind—Defence of Mr. Wells against Mr. Archibald Spofforth—Mr. Wells and Old Moore—Gorgeous symbolism in prophecy—Scarlet ladies of Babylon and seven-headed beasts—The sacred jigsaw puzzle—Common defects and fallacies of Internationalist schemes—Alternations of commercial conflict and actual war—Commercial conflict perhaps the more deadly—Our interest in sustaining the British Empire—Our Foreign Office "bunglers and bluffers"—Where are the perfectly wise Statesmen to work these perfectly wise International schemes?—

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I HAVE strayed so far from my original intention in writing this letter to you, and have treated of so many matters that are outside your immediate concern and jurisdiction, that I feel some apology is due to you, sir, for continuing to address you. The only excuse I can offer to myself, is that your position is merely an honorary one, and that, as I reminded you at the start, you are not under the least obligation to pay any attention to me. But I have an uneasy suspicion that, unless I can detain you as an imaginary hearer, I shall be left entirely without an audience. This is what has happened to me in respect of what I have written about the English drama. For thirty-five years I have begged my countrymen to take an intelligent interest in their theatre, to make it a place of wise amusement instead of a child's toyshop and the

playground of licentious tomfoolery. I cannot flatter myself that they have paid the least attention to what I have said, for to-day the English theatre and the English drama are—as I have described them in the earlier part of this letter. Nor can I hope to be more successful in reaching their ears, now that I am treating of matters of such supreme importance that the lasting welfare and safety of this empire depend upon our clearly understanding and rightly managing them.

On Sunday mornings before the war, sauntering throngs were wont to frequent the open space near the pond at the top of Hampstead Heath, there to fill their lungs with fresh air, and their minds with alfresco political convictions. Seven large crowds were usually gathered round seven loud-voiced orators of both sexes, who were bawling out seven varied and conflicting kinds of turbulent social doctrine. Hard by, was a gentle, soft-voiced evangelist, with a modest unassuming mien, in whom I detected a strong resemblance to myself. He was reading quietly and unobtrusively from the Bible, and wisely refraining from making any comment of his own. On many Sunday mornings in those ancient times, I passed by this meek, unpretentious teacher, and never once found him with so much as a single, casual, heedless listener. This discouraged him not a jot. Convinced of the value and importance of his message, he persistently read on. With your knowledge and experience of the level to which Popular Education has raised the literary tastes of the masses, you will easily understand, sir, that while the loud crude jargon of the social pulpiteers drew large approving groups of hearers, the finest passages of St. Paul and Isaiah could not catch the momentary attention of one passing idler.

As the Sunday mornings went by without bringing

him a solitary adherent, I became more and more interested in this sheepless shepherd. I found myself hoping, that by a lucky chance, or even by a special intervention of Providence in so good a cause, he would one day be rewarded by the notice of some stray loungeur or inquisitive urchin, or by gaining the ear of the policeman on parade, whose public duty might well allow him an occasional digression into spiritual affairs on a Sunday morning. Vainly did I wait for even so small a measure of popular recognition for this neglected dispenser of weighty truths and heavenly wisdom. The floating, chattering Sunday throngs went heedlessly by him, and he never detached a single hearer from the adjacent expounders of variegated social and political philosophy. Still he read on, impregnably indifferent to the impregnable indifference of the crowd.

I felt a growing sympathy with this rejected little missionary. The decay of a living credible religion in England had placed him in even more forlorn circumstances than the decay of a living credible drama had placed myself. And his response to the neglect of the public was the same as my own—an unwearied reiteration of the truth to unheeding ears. I had the same lively compassion for him that I had for myself. My fellow feeling moved me to lend him some countenance. I would occasionally loiter for a few minutes to become the solitary recipient of his ministrations, thus giving him, I hope, some faint impression of having an audience.

I must admit that his elocution was deplorably bad, being scarcely above the level of what is usually heard in fashionable West End theatres. But if his manner was deficient, his matter was excellent. He would choose, first perhaps a chapter from Romans, and with-

out any personal exposition of its theology, pass to one of the Psalms, and then to the leaping ecstasies of the second Isaiah, or to the golden and jewelled precepts of Proverbs, or the dark wonder wisdom of Job. The mellow cadences of the dead prophets and dreamers who for centuries have shown mankind the way of life, sounded strangely out of tune with the loud harsh clapper notes of the noisy new prophets, who were dinning quite other kinds of doctrine into the ears of the crowds across the green. A cannon, with its surrounding piles of shrapnel, has displaced the pulpits of the strident social orators, and spouting forth more convincing matter, has, for the time, dispersed their doctrines.

I hope, sir, you will be so obliging as to lend me your countenance for a little while longer, and allow me the comforting illusion of having an audience. I cannot pretend that what I am offering you, has the value and authority of the lofty messages which my fellow missionary punctually delivered every Sunday morning to his imaginary hearers. I fear, too, that my words may be as ill adapted to your frame of mind, as the admonitions of Solomon were to the tastes of the Sunday crowds; and that you may show yourself as indifferent to conversion as the Hampstead policeman. But having, like my despised evangelist, succeeded in persuading myself of the importance of my utterances, I trust you will be generous enough to accord me the continued privilege of addressing them to you.

This need not be any tax upon your time or your patience. I do not expect you to pay any more attention to what I am now saying, than you have paid to what I said in the earlier parts of my letter. For by the passing of your Education Bill, I notice that our young carpenters, from sixteen to eighteen, are still to be oc-

cupied with Cicero and algebra, rather than in making convenient doors and windows for their fellow workmen; and that our crowds of theatre-goers are not to be diverted from their preference for vulgar nonsense, by any such guidance towards a love and appreciation of Shakespeare as you might have given them, by affording opportunities for suitable education to our young actors and actresses.

In these circumstances, I may reaffirm the wholly formal and honorary nature of your position at the head of this letter—a position which is not less dignified than that of the British Lion in the Royal Arms on a shop-front, and which does not require its occupant to concern himself with the transactions taking place inside the shop, or to be responsible for the quality of the wares displayed. Nothing more is required of him, than to preserve a correct attitude of obvious and lofty detachment from the proceedings.

With this disclaimer of any intention to waste your time, or capture your approbation, I station myself again at the cross roads where the two opposing signposts stand, the one pointing our people to Internationalism, the other to Patriotism.

Before the war, there was in all countries an ever-increasing number of men who persuaded themselves that the rivalries and enmities and conflicting interests of the nations, might be smoothed and finally submerged in a general amiable Internationalism, by the declared wills of all the peoples. It was so obvious that the working classes of all countries had more to gain by seizing and dividing the large stock of accumulated capital in the world, than by fighting amongst themselves to destroy it, that nothing more was needed to start them on this track, than to point out to them the gay

garden paradise awaiting their occupation at the end of it. Accordingly, Internationalism flourished exceedingly before the war. Large masses of our own people transferred the loyalty and allegiance they had instinctively felt for the country of their birth, to that much more admirably-managed International State, where everybody would have his Rights, where equal possessions and boundless plenty would be assured to all, and where Justice, Truth, Liberty, and Peace would reign perpetually. What temptation had anyone to remain an Englishman, when, by merely skipping over a few inconvenient obstructive facts, he could become the citizen of such a country?

Seeing that it was eminently desirable that this International State should be established without bloodshed, it was decided that no war should take place. One or two kings might have to be gently, or even somewhat forcibly, pushed off their thrones, if they declined to dwindle into evanescence; some more or less extensive civil disturbances and riots might take place, and a few obstinate people who refused to have sensible ideas, might have to be shot down. All other little difficulties could be successfully negotiated as we went along. The desirability of this International State being so obvious, all that we had to do was to keep on voting for it, and it would gradually come into being. Certainly there was no need to apprehend any outbreak of war amongst the nations, for the sufficient reason that this would upset all our plans. And having arranged for rations of universal happiness on a very liberal scale, according to indisputable pet formulas of our own, what could be more annoying than to have all our plans upset by an irrelevancy like war?

It was true that Germany was throwing millions

upon millions of men into her army, and building a formidable fleet. What of that? That was Germany's own business. Our business was to keep down our army to such negligible numbers as could give no possible provocation to Germany. By this means we should avoid war, and, what was more important, prevent our plans from being upset.

Besides, was not the good Scheidemann over there, fast locked with us, not in the loose brotherhood of blood, but in that fast brotherhood which binds together men who hold the same opinions upon abstract matters. It is written, there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And who can that friend be, but the man who holds the same sensible ideas about politics, or religion, or vaccination, or the monistic theory, that we ourselves hold? The good Scheidemann and his numerous fellows could never be brought to fight with actual guns and swords, the dear comrades who, side by side with them, were fighting and conquering the rest of the world with words and theories. No! No! If ever the day should come when the good Scheidemann and our comrades over there were commanded to plunge their swords in our breasts, they would throw them down in flat defiance and fall upon our necks, and brutal militarism would slink away baffled and defeated. That anything else could happen was incredible, for it would upset all our plans. Therefore let us take no notice of the fact that Germany is arming to her last man. We may safely leave it all in the hands of the good Scheidemann, for does he not hold the same opinions as ourselves? .

And most opportunely to confirm our opinions and to further our plans, a writer appears, who, by lucid and most irrefragable arguments, proves that war with Ger-

many is impossible, prophetically calling his book "The Great Illusion." This is the man after our own hearts. Here is one endowed even more than ourselves with political vision and insight keen enough to pierce through all brick walls of fact. How can we sufficiently honour him? What will be his most appropriate reward? We will make him a life member of the National Liberal Club. What less can we do for the man who incontrovertibly proves that war with Germany is impossible, than to give him the perpetual freedom of those marble halls? For how can we, busy as we are, shaping the future according to our plans, be expected to know that by some little flaw in his arguments, or by some little failure of facts to adjust themselves to our opinions, a war with Germany will come crashing down upon us in a few months? And, alas! one of the direst consequences of that war will be that the Government will seize our marble halls for its prosecution, and will drive us and our great illusionist to find shelter elsewhere.

Meantime, what is to be done with the doting old alarmist, who would upset all our plans by telling the country from his certain knowledge and ripe experience, that this war with Germany is imminent, inevitable, and is imploring the country to prepare for it? Let us pay no heed to him. Let us forget that he has spent all the days of his long and blameless life in unselfish, untiring devotion to our defence and security, from that far-off time when he thrice planted our flag upon the mess-house at Lucknow, to those dark months a dozen years ago when he rescued the Empire from the impending disaster which was threatening it through our former folly and negligence. And will he now give the remnant of his strength, and spend his last breath to

spread this pestilent heresy of mistrust and ill-feeling towards our good neighbour, Germany? Happily our great, sensible public holds the same opinions as ourselves, and is in no mood to listen to his unwelcome warnings. But cannot he be silenced? For if he awakens the country to its danger, it will upset all our plans. Will nobody bid the aged mischief-monger cease his irritating prattle?

Ah! here comes another man after our own hearts, who speaks with full authority and intimate knowledge of that dear land of enlightenment and benevolence, who finds its atmosphere so congenial that he has chosen it for his spiritual home, and who knows the minds of its rulers. For have they not with keen discernment of his character, made him the envoy of their goodwill towards us, their accredited go-between to soothe away any premature suspicions that may begin to buzz in our drowsy bewildered noddles? It is true, as he shall afterwards tell us in proof of his own discernment, that his own suspicions were aroused, and that he felt some alarm at what he saw and heard amongst his spiritual co-mates. But shall that move him to give even as much as a timely caution to his countrymen, and put them on their guard? No! he will continue to bring us bland and honeyed messages of conciliation, and treacherous assurances of peace. Nor need we much trouble now to ask whether the indestructible label that Time shall fasten upon him will be "Dupe of Germany" or "Deluder of England."

But here he comes, fresh from Germany, the authentic harbinger of loving communion between the two nations, who, with his superior knowledge of her rulers' benign intentions towards us, shall quickly stop the mouth of this tiresome, garrulous veteran. It might be

well to pour ridicule on the pertinacious old meddler, and taunt him with knowing nothing of his own business. Excellent! Our sagacious interruncio has opportunely turned the tables on the mischievous old warrior, and has adapted the European situation to the necessities of our political and social plans. We may safely trust his sound judgment in this matter, for does he not hold the same opinions as ourselves? And now we can go on arranging the future to our liking—Crash! The cannons are thundering from one end of Europe to the other. Could anything be more annoying?

And what shall we do with our opinions now?

Some few of us will change them, having belatedly come to the conclusion that it is safer to found opinions upon facts, than to trust that facts will adjust themselves to our opinions.

Some more of us will certainly not change our opinions because they happen to be in conflict with facts. Rather shall that be a reason for holding our opinions all the more doggedly. Yes, and we have conscience, too! And a conscience so nicely tuned, so obedient to our will, that we must needs hold its dictates to be infallible. Our conscience shall command us to hold fast to our opinions, and to cherish them all the more stubbornly, the more they are proved to be wrong. This war has upset all our plans for shaping a desirable future for mankind. We will take our revenge on the war by upsetting it. We will thwart its prosecution by every device we can imagine. We will distort facts; we will spread delusions; we will defame our countrymen; we will invent excuses for the enemy, and condone his hellish infamies. We will foment disaffection and strikes; we will protest against conscription, and delay it till

it may be too late. We will shake the resolution of the people, and we will weaken the hands of the Government. We will offer our embraces to the good Scheide-mann; we will intrigue to get into communication with him, for does he not hold the same opinions as ourselves? We will greedily seize every chance of bringing about an ignoble peace, or an equally welcome defeat. What do we care though civilization is blazing to ruins, and though every one of us may be sold into grinding slavery? Shall that be a reason for changing our opinions?

And the rest of us, who had also prepared a busy programme of social and political reforms just suited to the pressing needs of the people—what shall we do with our opinions? For it seems that the pressing needs of the people are for guns and shells, and men trained to slaughter—just the mischievous and evil things that we have all along counselled them to do without. Clearly, our opinions, though they were exactly suited to the conditions and circumstances that we desired, are not at all suited to the conditions and circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Such an admirable, well-considered set of opinions, too! And enforced by such a wealth of convincing argument, and such a powerfully organized caucus. It would be a pity to waste such a valuable set of opinions, after all the trouble we have taken to form them. Still we must own they are out of accord with very palpable and distressing facts. When our homes are being bombed, and starvation is possible, when the country is threatened with invasion and pillage, Patriotism becomes a temporary duty. And we will loyally fulfil that duty to our uttermost. This need not prevent us from running our opinions alongside of our Patriot-

ism, trusting that in the present confusion the incongruity will not be apparent. Happily, we have succeeded in getting our opinions largely accepted as permanent political gospel, and we may be sure that when once an opinion gets into a man's head, he is not going to dislodge it, merely because it is out of harmony with facts. We will therefore regard the war as a tiresome interlude, a disagreeable suspension of our political activities. When it is over, we can throw our Patriotism overboard. For what need will there be for Patriotism in a world which will be regulated by our opinions?

Indeed, the more we contemplate the future, the brighter is the outlook for our opinions. For as soon as the war is comfortably past, it will be clear to everybody that were it not for this pernicious vice of Patriotism, there would be no wars at all. Away with it, then, and let us work heart and soul for Internationalism, and the millennium that will accompany it. And surely if ever mankind deserved a millennium, it will be after this war. Not only do they deserve it, but they are evidently resolved to get it. And how can they get it, but by the wide diffusion and acceptance of our opinions? And how wonderfully our opinions are adapted to a millennium, and precisely to that kind of millennium which is most desirable for mankind in their present circumstances! Let us stick to our opinions, then, and furbish them up with a few new phrases, secure that when peace is declared, they will meet with almost universal acceptance.

For many years before the war, a growing body of political opinion had declared itself in favour of Socialism and Internationalism. The bulk of the Liberal party was in a process of absorption by its extreme ele-

ments, and was being gradually committed to principles that, if they proved to be sound and workable, would lead to the domination of the world by International Societies, and that, if they proved to be unsound and unworkable, would lead to universal anarchy. Roughly, the Liberals formed one party with groups of Labour Socialists and Internationalists, and the odd addition of Irish Nationalists, whose only qualifications for political association with Internationalists were an even larger capacity for discontent, and an even more fatal facility in expressing it.

The Socialists and Internationalists, though fewer in numbers, were gradually gaining the ascendancy of power in the party, because they were gradually gaining the ascendancy of power with the electors. There were various shades and forms of Socialism and Internationalism. None of them could agree in any feasible constructive scheme. But they all agreed that the present social structures of the various nations would have to be broken down, and the present forms of government destroyed, or rendered tributary to the supreme power of some sort of International Congress, which was to rule the civilized world in future.

This was the avowed aim of the Socialists and Internationalists; and the Liberal party, from the exigencies of its position, was driven to lend them more or less countenance, and more or less to adopt their programme. We may say that the whole of the variegated, composite party was working towards Internationalism, though many of them may not have been aware of their destination. It was not only the Germans who were preparing to dominate the world, and to enforce their regimen upon it. The Socialists and Internationalists were also preparing to dominate the world, and to enforce

their regimen upon it. And the Socialists and Internationalists were almost equally sure of success, whenever the trial should come. For they had clearly instructed their comrades that their true country was not the land of their birth which had treated them so scurvily, but that International State which would give them all they could desire, and which would arise as soon as the present obsolete social structures were demolished. And having ceaselessly drilled their comrades in allegiance to that International State, and sworn them to work for its speedy establishment, what would happen if war were declared between the nations? The Socialists and Internationalists would proclaim their solidarity, throw down their arms, and refuse to fight each other. Those who expected dear comrades who held the same opinions to cut each other's throats, would find themselves grievously mistaken, and would be put to the rout. After perhaps a few feeble splutterings, the projected war would fizzle out for lack of material to nourish it.

Some such result was confidently expected by Socialists and Internationalists to follow any attempt to cause fratricidal strife between the enrolled citizens of that new world commonwealth, whose foundations they had so well and truly laid on the ruined and obliterated landmarks of extinct Patriotism.

What did really happen?

As soon as war was declared, the Socialists and Internationalists immediately split into strictly national groups, and rushed to defend their respective flags. And excepting small minorities, they have been amongst the loudest and bravest defenders of the countries of their birth. Jaurès, who had opposed the three years' military service bill for France, recanted when the Germans were swarming towards her frontiers. Even the

witty, mischievous, impudent Impossible, who had tried to boss the British Empire by proving that everybody in it, except himself, was hopelessly wrong upon every subject—even he was obliged to make some show of loyalty to the stupid country that had applauded his antics in times of peace, but was not quite stupid enough to tolerate them, when, to the delight of his German friends, he stabbed her in her hour of darkest need.

And the good Scheidemann and his followers over there? Instead of throwing down their arms, what do they do but prove themselves to be the sturdiest of patriots, voting constant supplies to their robber government to carry on the most brutal war against their French and British comrades, and to murder helpless women and children? And to-day the recreant Scheidemann is accusing Us, the Socialists of the Entente—Us, who hold the same opinions as himself—is accusing Us of being the cause of prolonging this devastating war. He fastens the guilt of continued bloodshed upon Us! A man whom we had embraced in the sacred communion of International brotherhood! He brings this damning accusation against Us! We are sadly disappointed in Scheidemann. He is not the man we judged him to be. For when it comes to the push, he backs his own beloved country instead of backing his and our opinions. How shall we ever arrange the world to our liking, if men will go on backing their own countries against our opinions? And just as we had got them accepted as permanent political gospel by all the advanced thinkers of all classes in all civilized countries! How is it that facts have played us such an uncivil trick? How is it that they have so obstinately refused to conform to our opinions?

In all the affairs of life where the emotions are

brought into play, men's actions are guided by their instincts rather than by their opinions. Patriotism is the most compulsive and most universal of all instincts, excepting those of sex and maternity. As surely as the phagocytes in my bloodstream will rush to defend me when I am wounded, and will sacrifice themselves to make me whole, so surely will the men and women of a country leap to her flag when she is assaulted, and will willingly die that she may live. When an animal body grows old or corrupt, its own phagocytes turn upon it, and prey upon it, and hand it over to dissolution. When a nation grows old or corrupt, its men and women become seditious, and sap its strength, and hand it over to dissolution. How like sedition is to cancer!

Nature gives us all the primal instincts in excess. They are so necessary for our preservation that she encourages them to exaggeration. What single cause has worked more ravages and evil amongst mankind than the mad impulsions of the sexual instinct? Not war itself has more horribly scarred and maimed humanity, filled more hospitals, violated more homes, strewn the pathway of our race with more wrecks and castaways. Yet I have never heard of anyone who proposed to abolish the sexual instinct, except my Aunt Julia, who maintains that Providence has scandalously mismanaged the whole business. The arguments whereby my Aunt Julia seeks to abolish the sexual instinct, run exactly parallel to the arguments whereby Internationalists seek to abolish the instinct of Patriotism. All who have well-educated minds will hope that my Aunt Julia may be more successful than the Internationalists have been.

The maternal instinct often turns to blind idolatry. It shows itself absurd, unreasoning, unreasonable, un-

just, unscrupulous. It is nearly always tainted with these faults. But ugly as they are in themselves, these faults are but the shadows and inversions of the supreme virtues of motherhood, infinite devotion, tenderness, patience, forgiveness, exalted self-sacrifice. There are many estimable women without the maternal instinct. Nature disdains these superior creatures, pushes them aside, and commands them to perish. The maternal instinct is so valuable to our race, that Nature is careless how many faults she binds up with it.

Again, take the permanent instinct of religion. It is so valuable to our race, that Nature seems to care little what stupidities men believe, so long as they believe in something. Perhaps I should have said that God seems to care little what men believe, so long as they believe in something. But it would be dishonouring to God to make Him responsible for the religious beliefs of mankind—for instance, amongst other things, for the comic and virulent nonsense of the Athanasian Creed. It is more respectful to God to throw the blame for such things upon Nature, leaving the puzzling question of the distinction between God and Nature to offer us excellent material for future debate.

Here I am sorely tempted to suggest a parallel between the experts and expounders of religion, and the experts and expounders of other matters—shall we say of Education? But I abstain, and repel with suitable indignation any impertinent memory of Horace Walpole's rebuke to the expert and expounder of heraldry, "Why, you don't understand your own silly business!"

Affirming, then, with passionate sincerity of conviction, the urgent need of a credible religion, it may be readily admitted that even the two hundred confused and contradictory forms of belief that we now profess

are better than no religion at all. Blank Atheism, blank denial, are condemned to sterility. We must establish relations with the Eternal. There are many honest, clear-thinking, highly-intellectual people who are without the religious instinct, but like the superior women who are without the maternal instinct, they pass away and leave no offspring. Mankind goes on believing—something. Religion is one of the primal necessary instincts. It springs up anew in every child. It is so valuable to our race, as the only surety for conduct, and the only builder of character, that Nature constantly replants it in our hearts, and is careless what stupidities, bigotries, and cruelties she binds up with it.

It is the same with the permanent universal instinct of Patriotism. It is so valuable to a nation that the peoples who are without it, tend towards servitude and decay, and are soon absorbed in neighbouring nations, who may be much lower in civilization, but have a stronger instinct of Patriotism. As religion tends to bind our private conduct into a consistent and effective unity, so does Patriotism tend to bind our national conduct into a consistent and effective unity.

May we not claim that Patriotism is not only valuable and preservative to a nation in its dealings with other nations, but that it is also valuable and constructively energizing to the human race as a whole? It is by struggle and warfare against our nearest competitors and rivals, who are then subdued into co-operation and combination with us against our next nearest competitors and rivals—it is by means of these alternations of competition and co-operation, that we have raised ourselves from monkeyhood to a state of savagery, and from a state of savagery to our present level of civilization. This law of alternating competition and co-

operation may be traced in its constant but very irregular working, in all our affairs, and in all the past history of our race. When competition is once subdued, it leads to co-operation in mutual interests with our late competitors. Co-operation, in its turn, leads to a more enlarged form of competition, which, again, leads to a more enlarged and higher form of co-operation. Patriotism has always been an accessory to this alternative process as it works amongst nations. Is not Patriotism an instrument in the evolution of civilization? And is it not therefore beneficial to the whole human race?

When we compare Patriotism with such other primal necessary instincts as maternity and religion, we find that like them, it has the defects of its qualities. Like maternity, it often shows itself absurd, unreasoning, unreasonable, unjust, unscrupulous. Like religion, it often shows itself stupid, bigoted, cruel, dishonest in thought and in practice. And beyond this, Patriotism often has an offensive blatancy and megalomania which are all its own. Patriotism is nearly always tainted with these faults. But ugly as they are in themselves, these faults are like those of motherhood, only the shadows and inversions, the seamy side of its virtues. And accordingly we find that Patriotism being so valuable and necessary to the vigorous health and prosperity of a people, Nature seems to be careless how many faults and excesses she binds up-with it in the national character.

But if Patriotism is valuable and necessary to a people, Justice and Humanity and the keeping of the great commandments are still more valuable and necessary. For unless these are revered and practised, human society falls to pieces. Only in the measure that these are revered and practised, does any unit of hu-

man society hold together. When a nation does away with the great commandments, and sacrifices them to its Patriotism, sooner or later they take their revenge, and bring that nation to ruin. If Germany had succeeded in gaining dominion over the whole world, she would never have been secure; for the whole world would have raised itself in perpetual revolt against her, until finally, perhaps after generations of misery and bloodshed, she would have been brought down. It is Germany's crimes that have lost her the dominion of the world. Her Patriotism and discipline and industry would have won it for her.

How potent, how compulsive, how possessive of the heart and soul of a people, how indestructible an instinct is Patriotism, is shown by Ireland.

There is no thoughtful Irishman, who has examined the facts and finances of the British Exchequer, and who does not know that Ireland is the most favoured part of the United Kingdom. There is no thoughtful Irishman who does not know that to the extent that Ireland is separated from England, to that extent Ireland will be impoverished and weakened, and handed over to the internal dissension. There is no thoughtful Irishman who does not perceive that the entire separation of Ireland from Britain, would bring untold misery and economic ruin to his country, and would shake the entire structure of ordered government throughout Europe. There is no thoughtful Irishman who understands his countrymen, and does not foresee that within three years of separation from England, civil war would be raging over his land, and would have to be quelled by outside intervention. There is no thoughtful Irishman who does not know that England stands waiting to disengage herself from Irish affairs to the utmost

limit, and perhaps beyond the utmost limit, that is compatible with the existence of social order, and the security of life and property in both countries.

There is the map, which shows the two islands securely anchored within a few miles of each other. And there are the thousand, thousand ties of social interest, economic interest, trade, custom, language and every day intercourse and relationship, which through centuries have grown round the lives of the two peoples, and which cannot be severed without tearing a mortal wound in the sides of both of them.

Yet against all reason, all interest, all wisdom, against all argument, and all knowledge, this inextinguishable instinct of Patriotism possesses Ireland, and drives her to clamour unceasingly for fatal disruption. What Englishman is there, who, loving his own country, does not ungrudgingly sympathize with this wild adoring passion of her sons for Ireland? What Englishman is there, who would not, if it were only possible, satisfy it to the full, give Ireland the cursed gift of a separate destiny, and pityingly, reluctantly, cruelly, loose her to drift or crash to her doom?

But there is the map. The two countries cannot be wrenched asunder. And there are hostages on each side who cannot be stifled, or betrayed to persecution and extinction by the foes of their own household.

Every Home Rule Bill that has yet been devised, is now clearly seen to have been unworkable—an instrument of further disagreement and embroilment. And will we now concert some new scheme of lavish concessions, and paper obligations, and juggling compromises and instalments of progressive dismemberment—yet one more unworkable abortion to breed new confusions and dissensions between the two countries?

Will we never face the plain issue, and own to ourselves that there is no middle way between irrevocable separation, and Federal Parliaments, giving full play and encouragement to the local patriotism of each division of the United Kingdom—a Kingdom that must be united; either United in gathering peace and security and prosperity to itself under one compact, sovereign, central authority, or as surely United in rendering itself a common prey to internal disorganization, and external assault, and passing through successions of strife and misery and bloodshed, to the same goal of a common dissolution and destruction. There is the map. A United Kingdom it must remain.

If Federal Parliaments will not solve the question, then it can only be solved in blood. But Ireland will not be content with a Federal Parliament. Hear a wise word from Goethe. In 1829 the British Parliament had already begun its blind, hopeless, perennial task of curing the woes of Ireland. "Give Ireland Catholic Emancipation," was then the cry, "And she will be pacified." Said Goethe to Ekermann: "This we can see. Ireland suffers from evils that will not be cured by any means, and therefore, of course not by Emancipation. It has hitherto been unfortunate for Ireland to endure her evils alone; it is now unfortunate England is also drawn into them." [Sage of Weimar, you said then the final word.]

What welter of seditions, and brawls, and enmities, what gusts and tempests of rebellions, what barren martyrdoms, what harvests of misery and despair, what alternations of assassins' plots and politicians' dodgeries, what wildernesses of talk in Parliament, and what deluge of words in the Press, what multifarious shifts and evasions, and intrigues and treacheries, have we

since passed through, only to find ourselves thwarted, and baffled, and impotent, with Ireland still nursing against us hatred and revenge; more stubbornly resolved not to be pacified than when Goethe threw his illuminating beam upon her desolation a hundred years ago!

Is there, as Goethe said, no cure for the woes of Ireland? Then England must needs continue to bear them with her; must take upon her own aching shoulders the greater part of the burden; with constant, forbearing, sisterly love, with inexhaustible patience and ever-ready help, must steadfastly, unflinchingly refuse to deal out skimble-skamble, piecemeal separation and sham pacification, with their certain deadly recoil at the hearts of both nations.

Kathleen, sister Kathleen, most wilful, most perverse, and yet most dearly loved, and dearly lovable of all this human family, will you never forget our cruel treatment of you in years that have long gone by? In deep abasement, deeper than your sorrows, in contrition heaped up higher than we heaped your wrongs, we own that we injured and oppressed you beyond forgiveness; and yet do supplicate your forgiveness, that we may heal your wounds that our hands have made, and wipe away your tears that we caused to flow.

That sacred fire of never-dying love for your country—we would not quench it, Kathleen. We would but contain it on its own hearth, that it may not be fanned by these outside, wild world gusts and spread its fury till it burns down both our homes.

Old things have passed away. In this new perilous world, we need each other's love and support. Great need we have of you, Kathleen. Far greater need you have of us.

Will you still multiply your miseries, and add to your afflictions, and increase your poverty, by staying apart from us? Will you remain wedded to calamity, and mortgaged to despair?

Look back upon your yesterdays, all filled with fruitless controversies and strifes; with the wreckage of your delusions, and the ruins of your hopes; with blind hatreds and revenges against us, and treasons against yourself; with vain bewailings of your fate, and desperate wrestlings to escape from it—one long, unceasing tale of feckless stratagems, plots, insurrections and revolts, told over and over again, with hideous repetition and persistent emphasis of defeat.

And will you now write that history all over again? Will you make your future a more dreadful copy of your past? Will you dedicate tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow to the wild and bloody pursuit of common disaster for us both; and dream your mad dream of vengeance and disunion, and wake to find you have dragged us twain over the verge of irrevocable destruction?

Will you dree that weird, Kathleen?

Even then we shall be united. Our arms are about each other's necks, either in choking grips of enmity, seeking to strangle each other, or in embraces of friendship and sisterly love. Struggle as you will, Kathleen, we cannot be free of each other. No separate destiny can you have, willingly as we would give it to you. Our final partnership is sure, and though we have not been lovely and pleasant in our lives, in our death we shall not be divided.

Kathleen, sister Kathleen, what fresh bloodstains are these upon your hands? Ah, cleanse yourself of them, and throw away that secret dagger. For be sure, that

within three years of self-government, you will be using that same dagger with deadlier effect to stab your own flesh, than ever you used it against us.

Frustrated and defeated already, are all your schemes of independence even before you have laid them; miledewed is every harvest that you shall raise, even before you have sown its seed; your looms shall not weave, and your ships shall not sail; your harbours shall not be built, and your coasts shall have no commerce but with the winds; a lonelier desolation shall creep over your hills, and decay shall be a more ruthless invader of your cities, than ever were your English foes—the grass is already growing in their streets; and Penury, Squalor, and Misrule are appointed their chief magistrates. This is the heritage of Separation that you claim from England. How can we add to the wrongs we have done you in past centuries by giving you Separation Today?

Kathleen, sister Kathleen, there is but a narrow stretch of sea between us. Will you for ever persuade yourself that it is an ocean, wider and angrier than the Atlantic, and never to be crossed? Will you not at last, Mavourneen, show us a most noble forgiveness, and let us find our way to you across that narrow sea, with loving kindness, and help and reconciliation, with assuagement and obliteration of the past?

Patriotism is not wholly a matter of race and of country, though it draws its richest nourishment from the blood of its fathers, and throws its deepest roots into its native land. We, who were born amongst the meadows and hedgerows of England, may delight more in mountains and heather, but the wildest and sublimest scenery never takes such a hold upon our hearts. There are passages in Shakespeare that only an Englishman

can fully understand, and some that give a relish of homely interpretation only to those who are native in his neighbouring soil and air. Even to-day there are many common folk among the South Midlanders, who have a kinship with Shakespeare, and an intimacy of approach to him, which is denied to scholars and commentators.

An incipient form of Patriotism springs up in every village. The inhabitants of Little Pedlington have an inborn contempt for the inhabitants of Great Pedlington; while the dwellers in Great Pedlington are filled with derision for the dwellers in Little Pedlington. East Gawkhams live in simmering feuds with West Gawkhams, and prides itself upon its higher level of morality. West Gawkhams return the antagonism of East Gawkhams, and brags of the finer achievements of its cricket club. There is little enough to justify these boasts of local superiority, for the morality of East Gawkhams is deplorable, and the cricketers of West Gawkhams are a team of contemptible amateurs. But in any matter that concerns the interests of their common county, all these four villages will stubbornly unite against the adjoining county. For counties, too, have their local Patriotism.

These incipient Patriotisms have their excesses and absurdities, which it is to be hoped that Popular Education and Internationalism will eradicate in the course of ten thousand years or so. Meantime, let us take note that these instincts are not the prejudices of mere yokels, but are part of the common heritage of humanity. They begin in the family itself, for though we may fall out at home, we stoutly defend our kinsfolk from any interference or aspersion by our neighbours. If we watch ourselves, we shall find that we are all guilty of

an unreasonable preference for our own family, our own village, our own tribe, our own trade, our own class, our own country. It is not only thieves who, from the exigencies of their calling, hang together and band themselves against the rest of mankind. All human institutions and organizations are pervaded by clannishness, which is a form of Patriotism. It has the same defects and vices, but on the balance it is largely advantageous, helpful, constructive. It is inherent in all mankind. What one of us has not in him some smack of the perverse partiality of the old Yorkshireman who, having been taken to see the wonders of London for the first time, surveyed his native town on his return and declared "Eh! There's nowt to come up to Pudsey after all!"

But Patriotism often disengages itself from the ties of race and country. When we are torn away from our people and the land of our birth, our hearts soon begin to throw out tendrils towards the folk and the country of our adoption, and we end by clinging to them with entire loyalty and devotion. This engrafted Patriotism is always liable to suspicion, both unjust and just. Nevertheless, it has constantly given unquestionable proof of its staunch and incorruptible allegiance to its foster motherland. America may be greatly proud that she has overcome the formidable threat of German obstruction to her cause, and that the vast majority of her citizens of German descent have enthusiastically declared their attachment to her flag.

Surely if this war has proved anything, it has proved the reality, the vitality, the indestructibility of Patriotism. It has everywhere shown itself to be the compulsive instinct, the governing force that binds a nation into effective unity, that moves and quickens all the re-

lations of nations with one another. Doubtless it has often shown its characteristic defects and excesses. But, except for the Patriotism of Belgium, France, England, Italy, America, and our other Allies, the whole civilized world would have been under the heel of Germany to-day. Internationalism, in all its manifestations, has shown itself to be mischievous, obstructive, ruinous, the engine of social disruption and anarchy.

This must needs be so. Every nation is a living social organism, whose existence depends upon its obedience to the general laws that govern all living things. None of its many internal functions can be performed except in harmonious working with all its other functions. It cannot be healthy, or long continue as a living corporate entity, unless all its organs work together for the welfare of the whole body. This is a mere commonplace of sociology, but it is constantly ignored in legislation, and is frankly despised by Internationalists.

The current term "Reconstruction" implies a flat denial of the laws that govern national reparation and development. It is sure to be misleading, and may be most harmful, in the period of social repair and convalescence that lies before us after the war. For the word "Reconstruction" confirms the ancient and persistent delusion that men and institutions can be transformed according to the few simple rules that carpenters and masons follow in handling their unresisting blocks of wood and stone. The same heap of bricks can be made into a pigsty or into a cathedral, and will uncomplainingly yield themselves to the design of the architect, whatever edifice he may choose to build with them. The statute books of all nations are littered with the abortive enactments of legislators who have treated men as blocks of wood and stone that can be mor-

tised into a geometrical social structure which they have designed. "Reconstruction" is a mischievously wrong term to apply to those activities of social reparation in which we shall soon be engaged. It encourages us in a wholly false conception of the nature and scope and limitations of those activities.

Nations cannot be "reconstructed." The social architect who tries to "reconstruct" a nation, finds, sooner or later, that he is handling live red-hot bricks, that will not lie quiet in their places, but keep on jumping about with wills of their own, when he tries to fit them in his well-arranged scheme. The regeneration of society must be accomplished, not by methods akin to those of the carpenter and the builder, but by methods akin to those of the physician. The physician is successful, only if he tunes his treatment to the present condition of the individual body under his care, and only so far as he can coax a response from the vital forces within that body. It is the vital forces within the body that work its repair.

So the social reformer is successful only when he understands the infinitely complex laws that govern the growth and development of the body politic, only when he tunes his treatment to present conditions, and only in the measure that he can draw a response from its living indwelling moral and spiritual forces. It is the moral and spiritual forces within a nation that must work its regeneration. If these are decayed and moribund, the social reformer will get no response, even though he may have applied the correct treatment. He is like the doctor in "Tristram Shandy" who gave his patient the right medicine, but the man died. "He ought not," said the doctor.

All this is well understood by practical legislators.

Then why do we continue to talk of "Reconstruction," when already the immense majority of our electorate of all classes are possessed with the delusion that, because some condition of society is desirable for themselves, or for their neighbours, or for the nation, or for the planet, it can be brought about by merely passing Acts of Parliament? Are we not likely to encourage much legislative quackery, ending in disappointment and disorder? Would it not be well to change the title of "Ministry of Reconstruction" to that of "Ministry of Reparation"? It would be less likely to mislead us as to the nature of the work that lies before us, and of the methods that we must use to make it prosper.

I do not say that a society or a nation is a compact animal, very like a camel, or very like a whale. Obviously nations do not reproduce themselves after the manner of animals. Nations are renewed and grow into separate organisms, by means of fissure, conquest, interpenetration, interbreeding, and absorption. But when these processes have reached a certain stage, a nation is a distinct corporate entity, and maintains its individuality till the same processes bring about its dissolution. While it exists as a nation, it has its own will and impulses, its own purposes and aims, and its own set of highly-involved internal organs, adapted to its own needs and pursuits, just like an animal. All its activities must be carried on by means of this set of internal organs, working in co-operation for its individual welfare. A nation is always an organized mass of living tissue, subject to the laws that govern the growth and processes of living matter. It can only be repaired by strict obedience to these laws.

Internationalists look upon these several masses of organized living matter, as so many structures of brick

and timber which can be pulled down and used to build up one new universal edifice of humanity. Even if we allow, as we readily may, that the laws, institutions, and social fabric of each nation, are, in many respects, like a house that provides a shelter, workshop, nursery, and playground to the people who have built it and live in it—granting this, yet the inhabitants of each national home remain as a separate family, with their own manners, prejudices, morals, and beliefs, and with interests and aims that are in perpetual conflict with many of the interests and aims of their neighbours.

There was once a quaint old township of forty-six houses, of odd sizes and shapes; all of them built at different times, in widely varying styles; some of them large and commodious and imposing; others of middling size and importance; some of them small and filthy and pestilential; some of them new and crude and jerry-built; many of them old and ramshackle and tumble-down, having been repaired, and divided, and added to, and altered to suit the convenience of the successive owners in the past generations. These houses were severally inhabited by families of different ranks, sizes, and degrees of relationship; rich, poor; small, large; respectable, disreputable; with divers habits, tastes, propensities, means of livelihood, mental and physical capacities, morals, religions, casts of features, facial angles, complexions.

Owing to these great diversities, there was always more or less strife and disturbance in the town, and occasionally there was brawling and fighting in the streets; especially as the acreage of the parish was limited, both for agricultural and building purposes. There was perpetual wrangling over the most coveted sites, and most fertile fields, inasmuch as many of the owners

and occupiers of them could not show a good title, and in many cases had indeed no claim beyond that of having forcibly ejected the former holders, who also had very doubtful rights of possession. Sometimes the fighting was between two neighbouring families, while the rest of the town looked on, some trying to mediate, some encouraging one or the other party. Often before the fight was ended, one or two of the neighbours would join in the fray, according as their interests, or their opinions, or their love of a fight prompted them.

Occasionally one of these periodic quarrels would spread through the town, and nearly all the families would take part, on one side or the other, in a general riot. Traffic would be stopped, and the market stalls overturned. Paving stones would be torn up, and spades and axes and fire-irons used as weapons, till the gutters ran with blood. Houses would be burnt and plundered, and much valuable property destroyed. After one of these town fights which had been unusually brutal and destructive, and when at length peace had been restored, one or two of the leading citizens proposed that they should all agree never to fight again. Everybody was struck with the wisdom of this sensible proposal, especially the members of those families who could count the largest number of bloody noses and broken limbs. So they resolved to put it into practice at once, and entered into a covenant never to fight again, never, never, never.

Beyond this salutary provision against any future disturbance of the peace, another large remedial measure was brought forward. There arose in the town a certain Mr. Fervent Impossiblist, who had long brooded over the sad state of its affairs, and had hatched in his brain a simple plan which would not only prevent

any further riots, but would remove the economic distress which prevailed in most families, and would enable the whole town to live in greatly increased wealth and comfort and convenience. He called a meeting of the inhabitants, and laid his scheme before them.

"The condition of this town is a disgrace to humanity," he declared. "Instead of living in amity and peace amongst ourselves, and striving to make everybody happy and comfortable and prosperous, here we all are, wasting half our energies and half our time in tricking and hindering and swindling each other, in muddling all our civic concerns, and in fighting and disabling each other. We have to employ a large body of police to enforce order, and yet we are in constant dread of burglary and depredations. We have to keep all our houses locked and barred, and to pay a heavy insurance on our valuables. Yet we are never safe, but live in ceaseless anxiety and alarm about them. Really this state of affairs is intolerable."

These remarks were received with general approval, for certainly the town was in a very unsatisfactory condition, and most of the inhabitants were genuinely anxious for a radical improvement, especially in their own lots.

"You oppress and ill-treat your servants," he continued. "In some houses they are lodged in dirty unhealthy rooms, and half starved."

This was quite true, and drew frantic applause from the servants themselves, for many of them had good reason to think themselves ill-used. And even those who were very well off, and had all reasonable comforts, were quite ready to be convinced that they were shamefully underpaid and downtrodden. Indeed it was no-

·ticed that the loudest cheers for the speaker came from this latter class.

"Now," said Mr. Fervent Impossibilist, "this state of things must positively cease. All these evils and abuses must be swept away from this time forward."

There was a shout of wide and hearty agreement.

"What is the cause of this inequality, injustice, ill-feeling, oppression, disorder, waste, wrangling, and fighting? It can all be traced to the fact that we live in our own separate homes. This makes us selfish and callous, greedy for our own comfort and prosperity, and for the welfare of our own children, careless of our neighbours' comfort and prosperity, and neglectful of our duties towards our neighbours' children. For in any well regulated society, we should be as zealous for the welfare of our neighbours' children as for the welfare of our own, and should work as hard to secure it. How otherwise can Justice and Equality be meted out to everybody, and how otherwise can we all get our Rights?"

At the sound of the word "Rights," the servants burst into loud and continued cheering. For, as I have said, many of them had been badly treated. Indeed some of them had not long discovered that they had any "Rights," and the mere pronouncement of the simple word "Rights" had the same effect upon them that a strong dose of neat brandy has upon a strict teetotaler.

"This baleful habit of living in our own separate homes," the speaker went on, "encourages us to take a pride in them, to keep up a large number of servants, and to furnish them in a better style than our neighbours can afford. It leads to rivalry and display, and provokes our neighbours in smaller and shabbier houses

to discontent and envy, and moves them to stir up a town fight that they may get some plunder. And, again, this evil habit of living in separate homes, prevents us from mixing freely with our neighbours, from adopting their habits, sympathizing with their aspirations, and overcoming our prejudices against their morals and complexions. It keeps us from understanding each other, and from forming one large happy family in one large happy home. But above all, this pernicious habit of living in separate houses, is the cause of the great waste of our energies and resources, and of the consequent economic distress that prevails throughout the town. For it forces us to keep up forty-six different establishments, each with its own set of servants, who have to provide forty-six separate services of meals, and perform a vast amount of drudgery—" (There was a buzz of approbation from the servants, which grew into ringing cheers)—"Drudgery that would be quite unnecessary if we were all members of one large household."

The excitement among the servants increased. The plan that Mr. Fervent Impossiblist proposed appeared so desirable to them, that without waiting for him to disclose any further particulars, they began to form groups to discuss how they could put it into immediate execution.

"Now I propose," continued the orator, "to make a clean sweep of all this prejudice and misunderstanding between different families, all this quite unnecessary envy and hatred and greed, all this ill-usage of servants, all this economic waste and misery—I propose to abolish it all from this time forth. Let us pull down these rotten old tenements, these nests of family pride and selfishness, these breeding places of jealousy and covet-

ousness and strife, these nurseries of intrigue and ambition, these abodes of tyranny, these haunts of domestic oppression——”

A frenzied shout of applause rose from the throats of the servants.

“Let us raze them to the ground !”

Some of the servants started off to find hammers and other instruments of destruction.

“Let us build one large brand new home for us all to live in, with every comfort and convenience for each one of us, with one large table for us all to partake of our meals in common, one large kitchen to cook for us all, one large bath-room for those of us who may be disposed to use it, one large fireside for us all to gather round in the evening. And as for servants, let us all wait upon one another——”

This was enough. All the discontented folk of the town, and these formed the great majority, rushed off to ransack and destroy their neighbours’ houses.

While Mr. Fervent Impossibleist was explaining his plan to some of the citizens who were a little doubtful as to its feasibility, and were pressing him for further details, a raging mob had begun to batter down the strongest and most substantial buildings in the main street. The riot lasted for several days and nights, and was the most furious and bloody and destructive that the town had ever known. For as I have said, and must repeat, many of the servants had been badly treated and oppressed, and all of them were determined to get their Rights. And this general sense of being ill-used and kept out of their Rights, had fostered in them a hatred of the very walls and furniture of the houses where they had suffered, and where many of them had been born and had lived all their lives. Indeed most of them

supposed that the walls and furniture were in some way largely accountable for their sufferings. They therefore derived great satisfaction from wreaking their vengeance upon the scenes and implements of their servitude. And when once they had become inflamed with the lust of destruction, they did not limit their activities to the walls and furniture that had offended them, but continued to batter and demolish everything that came within their reach, leaving not a post standing upright, or one brick cemented to another. Nor did they cease till the town was half wrecked, and till all the stores of food in it had been consumed.

There followed many months of the greatest disorder, misery, and privation for all the people in the town, of all classes. And unfortunately it was the servants who suffered the most, and endured the worst ills. For it afterwards came to light, that at an early stage in the meeting, many of the cunning well-to-do people, foreseeing trouble and disturbance ahead, had sneaked away to their homes, and had stolen thence as much food, and as many of the necessities of life, as they could lay hands upon, and had hidden them in various places against the time when they might be in want. This was a very unsociable proceeding on their part. Nor could they offer any better defence for it, than the paltry excuse that they did not wish to starve. However it served to tide many of them over the time of cruel want and misery that followed the riot, and that lasted for months after it had been quelled; whereas the servants, being left without any resources, suffered extreme privations, and many of them perished miserably.

After some months of the greatest general disturbance, the town settled down into comparative peace and orderly life. Those families whose houses had not been

demolished or irreparably damaged, returned to occupy them, and to make the repairs necessary to render them once more habitable. Some of the families who found themselves homeless, became the servants of their more fortunate neighbours. A few of the servants, who had seized the houses and goods of their masters during the riot, stoutly defended themselves in their stolen properties; and as they could not be ejected without great further disturbance, they were allowed to remain in possession. It was noticed that these upstarts showed themselves to be more overbearing and tyrannical than the masters whom they had displaced.

But for a long while, the whole town lived in great discomfort and poverty and misery. Much useful and valuable property had been destroyed, and many beautiful pieces of old furniture had been broken to pieces. The various families lived in separate houses, much as they had done before the riot. But as general distrust and ill-feeling had been engendered, there was much less kindness and sociability and forbearance in the general intercourse of the town. On the whole, the condition of things for some years was incomparably much worse than it had ever been.

Mr. Fervent Impossibilist continued to point out to the misguided community, that this atmosphere of quarrelsomeness, and the consequent jarrings that arose in all their dealings, were due to the folly and perversity of the various families who, in spite of his warnings, would still persist in living in separate homes, instead of forming one large united household under one roof. Nor did he cease to urge his fellow citizens to break up their exclusive habits, and adopt his scheme, as the only cure for the social abuses and economic evils that afflicted the town.

Does anyone suppose that if Mr. Fervent Impossibilist had succeeded in building his brand new town home, and had persuaded all of the citizens to inhabit it—does anyone suppose that there would not have been far more bitterness, disorder, strife, and brawling amongst them, than when they lived in their own homes, or that in less than twenty-four hours the place would not have been a raging pandemonium?

Does anyone suppose that the various nations of the earth, in their present stages of development, with their irreconcilable diversities of all kinds, can live peaceably under some artificial form of unified central government, where supreme power will presumably be lodged in the hands of a mixed Committee? Does anyone suppose that such a state of world civilization can be realized, or even that any approach can be made towards it, until four-fifths of us have changed our rooted habits and propensities, our ways of living and thinking, our social and moral standards, our religious beliefs, our facial angles, and our complexions?

Internationalists will doubtless say that they do not at present propose to establish a unified central government that will arrange and direct the world's affairs. There are many degrees and kinds of Internationalism. The term covers widely differing sets of opinions. If its discordant votaries were pressed to give a strict definition of its meaning, most of them would probably reply with the unquestioned authority of Humpty Dumpty himself, "When I use a word, it means exactly what I choose it to mean—no more and no less."

These varying sects of Internationalists are more or less allied, and are in some cases identical, with varying and discordant sects of revolutionary Socialists. The general scheme and aim of them all, so far

as it can be discovered and stated in one compact formula, is to gain increasing control and management of International relations and transactions, and gradually to sap and supplant the established governments of the world, by making them subject in all their foreign affairs to a supreme central tribunal, elected by the preponderant vote of the working classes of all the peoples. If that is not their general scheme and aim, will Internationalists tell us what clear, practicable, constructive world plan they have in their minds, and by what practicable means they propose to carry it out? For the moment, and until I can make a further examination, I will use the term "Internationalism" to signify a definite purpose to attain the two objectives I have marked out. And I will assume that the various sects of Internationalists are so far united, as to recognize that they are working to reach these two objectives.

Probably a great majority of them suppose that this vast unification of human society can be brought about by peaceable methods; or at worst that it will be attended by a quite inconsiderable amount of actual fighting. Surely of all the delusions that have possessed mankind, this is the grossest and most dangerous. So far as Internationalism has been operative, it has everywhere shown itself to be the agent of confusion, disintegration, hatred, strife, anarchy, and bloodshed.

This must necessarily be so. Every social structure that has proved itself strong enough to shelter a nation, and to preserve it from internal disruption and external assault, has its foundations laid deep down in past history, and each of its successive stories has been built to suit the necessities, habits, industrial activities, mental and moral capacities, and religious beliefs of that particular nation. Internationalism strikes athwart all

these structures, cracks their walls, shakes their stability, and aims at pulling them down, obliterating all their divisions and boundaries, and reducing them all to one common level.

I do not say that in some far remote future, Nature may not people this planet with one pure race of wise and perfect men. I do not say that Nature is not busy even now considering the advisability of such a wholly beneficial change, and that She is not even now perhaps preparing the earth for the ultimate occupation of such a race. I do not know what plans Nature has got in her head. Therefore the spirit of prophecy is not upon me.

I do know full surely, that in no early or approximate period of time, can any effective system of International Government be firmly and lastingly established over mankind, without great and wide confiscation, disorder, misery amongst all classes, especially amongst the poorest, prolonged destruction and anarchy, and the shedding of torrents of blood, compared with which the stream that is now flowing might be a mere rivulet. They are blind self-deceivers who think that, in the present disposition of the peoples, or in any near future disposition of the peoples, the efforts of revolutionary Internationalism will lead us to Peace. If a long untroubled course of Peace is what we are seeking, let us not pursue it through the mazes of Internationalism, everywhere beset with thorns, and ambushes, and snares, and *ignes fatui*, and the lurking bandits of civilization.

There are many Internationalists who openly proclaim that they seek to destroy the whole fabric of society, by making ceaseless and violent war upon it. And there are weltering masses of mankind who are ready to listen to them, and to join them in pillage and massacre, on the chance of plundering something from the

wreck. Anarchy cannot be met by argument. It has to be shot down, or allowed to shoot itself down. And this primary duty to society, and to itself, it always performs, sooner or later.

But the large body of Internationalists are averse from actual warfare. They imagine that they can attain their ends by a gradual peaceful usurpation of diplomatic functions and the powers of foreign legislation, leading to the gradual absorption of existing governments. Many Internationalists are Pacifists who condemn all war as unlawful and unnecessary. Yet some of the most confirmed Pacifists show the warmest sympathy with the wildest forms of class warfare and anarchy. It is strange that men who shudder at the mere mention of war between nations, and who have villified the most righteous cause for which men have ever bled—it is strange that these turbulent pettifoggers should encourage a blind and furious hatred between classes, which, so far as it is kept alive and inflamed to action, can but break into sporadic recurrent warfare, ending in the establishment of the cruellest forms of universal militarism. For the soldier always has to be called in at the last. And it is difficult to get rid of him.

No doubt the great majority of Internationalists strongly deprecate any such united action by their associated groups in different countries, as would provoke an outbreak of war. They imagine that the tremendous transition from Patriotic to International Government can be brought about by voting for it—that is, by convincing the working classes, who form the great body of the electorate in each nation, that their interests are identical with the interests of the working classes in all the other nations, and are opposed to the interests of all the other classes in all the other nations.

Is this true?

Germany affirms that the present war was inevitable, and was brought about because of the constant and increasing collision between the economic and commercial interests of England and Germany. How far this may have been a contributory cause of the war, we need not stay to inquire. If the economic and commercial interests of England and Germany were opposed, as unquestionably they were, then the main interests of the working classes in each country must have been opposed; for the welfare of the working classes depends wholly upon economic and commercial conditions in each country. That, before the war, there was a fundamental and deadly antagonism between the vital interests of the working classes of England and Germany, is abundantly proved by the evidence that if Germany had not provoked the war, and had been content to pursue her cancerous system of peaceful penetration, she would in ten or twenty years have gained control of the most profitable industries, and of the chief markets of the world. English working men would have been pushed into the less desirable and less lucrative occupations, would have multiplied in dwindling numbers compared with German working men, and would have suffered grievous disadvantages from these dominant competitors. Undoubtedly this state of increasing enmity of vital interests and social welfare between English and German working men did really exist before the war. Yet all the time English working men were being urged to make a common cause with the good faithful Scheidemann and his friends against their common enemy, the capitalist.

But who has proved to be the real enemy?

And who will prove to be real enemies of the working men of each country in the still fiercer commercial war-

fare of the next generation? Will it be the capitalists of their own country, or those working men of other countries who are competing with them for the necessities of existence, the most desirable employments, and the easiest conditions of living?

There is, indeed, a very real opposition between the interests of the capitalist and the working man in any trade; and in that ceaseless struggle to obtain the highest reward for his labour, the greatest comfort for himself and his family, the largest openings for social advancement—so far as all these are consistent with the stability and high civilization of the State—in this most just and most laudable endeavour to alleviate in every way possible the hardships of his sharp-set life, I am entirely in sympathy with the working man.

But is it not becoming every day more plain, that while the interests of the working man and the capitalist in any country are opposed when they have to bargain with each other, their interests are mutual and identical when they have to bargain together against the competing working men and capitalists of other countries? And the affairs and transactions in which the working men and capitalists of any trade have a fellowship and solidarity of interest, are of much greater magnitude and importance than the domestic affairs and transactions in which their interests are opposed. It is obvious that the first main interest of both working man and capitalist, is to keep alive and flourishing that business upon which they both depend—the working man far more than the capitalist, who probably has other resources. The fair division of the profits arising from that business must always be a matter of secondary importance to them both, compared with the supreme necessity of keeping it going as a prosperous concern.

For if the business languishes and perishes, they both languish and perish—the working man certainly, the capitalist unless he has made other provision. It is the working man who is most accessible to the assaults of misfortune, always and everywhere. No juggling with social and political economy will ever alter this fact. And seeing how easily accessible to misfortune our working classes are, how every national mistake and calamity are in the end visited chiefly and most harshly upon them, it is of the first importance that we should discern where their true interests lie, and how they may best be secured.

It is for the working classes of our own Empire that I am concerned. They are right in looking upon the capitalists of their own country as their enemies, so far as the capitalists are neglectful of them, and bent upon “exploiting” them merely for profit. They are wrong in looking upon the capitalists of their own country, even at the worst, as their *chief* enemies. The inevitable conflict of interests between the working men and capitalists in each industry in each country, is a minor antagonism compared with their mutual conflict of interests with the interests of competing working men and capitalists in the same industry in other countries. It is to the perception of this essential permanent community of interest between the capitalists and the working men in each of our industries, that we must look for the liquidation of our enormous national debt, and for the gradual return to our former prosperity and easy means of livelihood.

Surely if the war has taught us anything, it has taught us that the stability and welfare of the State is the chief interest of us all. Now Internationalism not only strikes athwart and splits asunder the social struc-

ture of each country in its diplomatic and foreign relations; it also strikes athwart and splits asunder the social structure of each country in its economic and commercial relations. It works to bring confusion and strife into all our internal activities, and commercial disadvantage into all our dealings with other countries. If the masses of our people are taught that they owe their chief allegiance to a nebulous International State which does not exist; which in no discernible period of time is likely to exist; which, as the world is now constituted, cannot be brought into existence without a long intervening reign of anarchy and bloodshed; and which in the meantime can offer them no better security and protection than is afforded by rhetoric and phrases and false idealisms—if the masses of our peoples are taught this as the first article of their political creed, how can they be good citizens of their own country, and fulfil their duties to the State which does actually give them security and protection, and this in the measure to which they render it their undivided allegiance and support, and in the measure that it is firmly established, not in the void, but on this actual earth; standing on its own basis; compact with its own limits; a social structure, strong and enduring *because* it is distinct from all other social structures—rather, shall we say, a living social organism, capable of carrying on its internal and external functions, capable of growth and development, *because* it is distinct from all other living social organisms?

Here I feel bound to make a handsome concession to Internationalists, and frankly to own that each of them would be right in a world of his own making, and that in such a world his advice and direction would be of enormous benefit to the entire population. But I

am now writing of the actual world in which we live, and not of our vast new inheritance, where large delicious omelettes will grow on every tree, and where all other desirable things will be provided for us by similar methods.

Russia is now offering us an example of practical Internationalism in full working disorder. The avowed aims of Internationalists were proclaimed in Russia on the fall of the Czar—to destroy aggressive military power by talking to it; to clear the earth of dark upas trees of race hatred, national jealousy and ambition, by planting buttercups and daisies round their roots; to quell the greedy impulses and predatory instincts of the multiplying millions of mankind, by telling them that all is legally theirs that they choose to take; and having by these means brought about a state of universal harmony and prosperity, to ensure its continuance by dealing out equal coupons of happiness to everybody.

This was what Internationalism set out to do in Russia. What it has really done is to give to everybody an equal right to plunder everybody else, and an equal right to cut anybody's throat. So far have International principles prevailed in securing equality of opportunity in Russia. Is it not evident that the government of the Czar, foul and detestable as it was, did yet offer far greater protection and comfort, and far better conditions of living to the Russian people; that it was immeasurably less corrupt, less cruel, less tyrannical, less bereft of political instinct, less madly subversive of all the foundations of human society?

But Internationalists hailed the advent of Bolshevism with great joy. Mr. H. G. Wells said it was "our duty and an urgent necessity to get a grip upon the situation." He set out to get a grip upon the situa-

tion. When he had got a grip upon the situation, he came to the conclusion that the Bolsheviks were "straight"; that they were "probably honest" (they had just repudiated their national debt); that they were "shining clear"; that they were "profoundly wise," indeed, "altogether wiser and plainer than our own rulers." He declared that their aims were the same as our own. He was of opinion that their "mental and moral methods against German militarism might prove more powerful than the military method." He claimed that Bolshevik diplomacy was altogether superior to our muddling Foreign Office dilettantism, the Bolsheviks being "much better educated" than our own diplomatists, who were "ignorant and limited" men, "crudely ignorant of the world of modern ideas"; whereas the Bolshevik leaders were "intimately acquainted with the Labour movement, with social and economic questions, and with almost everything that really mattered in real politics." The Bolsheviks were working their end so well, that Mr. Wells urged us to consider the advisability of a systematic co-operation with them in their "profoundly wise" policy. Thus did Mr. Wells get a grip upon the situation in Russia.

Can human imagination conceive our plight to-day, if our rulers had followed Mr. Wells's advice, and had incorporated the cause of the Allies with that filthy mass of corruption, fraud, massacre, disease, and anarchy which now festers in the vitals of the Russian people? How thankful we may be that our Foreign Office is filled with limited, ignorant, uneducated men, who, not possessing Mr. Wells's "clarity," and being "crudely ignorant" in Mr. Wells's "world of modern ideas," could not get a grip upon the situation.

But Mr. Wells claims that his Internationalist Bol-

shevist friends are intimately acquainted with "social and economic questions, and indeed with almost everything that really matters in real politics." The Bolsheviks estimated the national expenditure for their first six months at £2,450,000,000—about five thousand millions for the year. This is what comes of being "intimately acquainted with social and economic questions." And nobody knew where the money had gone! In the "world of modern ideas" it seems that "everything that really matters in real politics" is for everybody to fill his pockets with as much public money as he can lay his hands on.

We notice with some alarm that a knowledge of "social and economic questions" is spreading amongst our own masses, and that they also are rapidly becoming "intimately acquainted with everything that really matters in real politics." With such startling evidence, as is afforded by Russian Internationalists, of the disaster that attends the study of social and economic questions in Mr. Wells's "world of modern ideas," I implore you sir, to forbid all such study in our English schools, and to substitute a prolonged study of the sixth, eighth, and tenth commandments, and of their effects upon mankind. There seems to be some reason for suspecting that, in the present state of our affairs, the commandments would offer a more profitable course of study than social and economic questions. For the commandments have proved their value in guiding and keeping, in some sort of order, those communities that have practised them during some thousands of years; whereas the study of social and economic questions—"in a world of modern ideas"—has proved to be ruinous to a great Empire in six months. I am sure you will agree with me, sir, that no country in the long run suffers an eco-

conomic injury from a scrupulous observance of the sixth, eighth, and tenth commandments. At any rate, let us take care to be well grounded in these commandments *before* we begin to study social economic questions. For here again we are forcibly reminded that it is by the practice of great, simple, ancient rules of conduct, rather than by the diffusion of Mr. Wells's modern ideas, that nations wax great and strong, and show themselves invulnerable to external assault and internal decay.

Having got a grip upon the situation in Russia, Mr. Wells next proceeded to get a grip upon the situation in Africa. This was not a task of great difficulty; for fifteen days after he had invited us to back up Internationalism in Russia, Mr. Wells invited us to set up Internationalism all over Africa. What had proved so salutary for benighted Russia, would be also salutary for benighted Africa.

We remember that the eminent physician, Sangrado, had but one medicine for all diseases—hot water. When an epidemic came, and all his patients died, he still stuck to hot water. In vain did Gil Blas suggest to him that, as all the patients were dying, it might be advisable to give them a chance of recovery by trying some other remedy. Sangrado replied that he would willingly change his treatment, but that he had written a book to prove that hot water was the correct specific for all diseases. He could not be expected to stultify himself, merely because his patients were dying under his hot-water treatment. Mr. Wells has written so much to prove that International hot water is the panacea for all political diseases, that he can scarcely be expected to change his treatment, merely because it has disastrous effects in all countries where it is tried. At

any rate, fortified by the spectacle of what Internationalism had accomplished in Russia, Mr. Wells produced a brand new International constitution for the whole continent of Africa.

I do not know much about Africa, except that there are large numbers of black people in the middle of it. I cannot pretend to say what medicine would be best suited to their political diseases. Mr. Wells proposes International hot water. He would put the entire population of the Continent under an International Commission, in which the interested nations, Africander, British, Belgian, Egyptian, French, Italian, Indian, Portuguese, would be represented in proportion to their interests. Whether Germany would come in, is for Germany to consider. Given a new spirit in Germany, Mr. Wells would restore the German flag in East Africa. Leaving Germany to consider whether she would like to return to East Africa, and feeling sure that she will readily oblige Mr. Wells and get a new spirit for the occasion—leaving this question, we may ask who is to say, even roughly, what are the respective proportions of the interests of all the other nations? How is this very thorny question to be decided? By voting, or by fighting? These are the only two methods by which large conflicting interests can be settled. And though voting is the method which we all greatly prefer, there always comes a time, sooner or later, when voting does not settle vital interests that are in permanent conflict, but only complicates them the more. And then the soldier has to be called in—which is what we all wish to avoid. Does not Mr. Wells see that the mere attempt to settle what proportion of interests each nation has in Africa, and what amount of representation on his Committee should be allotted to each of them, is beset

with provocations to International strife? That is, it tends to cause the very evil that he would set up his Commission to prevent.

But granting that his Commission could be amicably constituted, what are the chances that it would work successfully, and secure the peaceful development of Africa without constant International friction? Mr. Wells would permit the French flag still to wave over Senegal, and the British flag to wave over Uganda, while, in the sweet by-and-by, the German flag may wave over East Africa. So much deference would Mr. Wells pay to the various flags. He would allow them to wave, and perhaps occasionally to flap. Presumably this would be an honorary and ornamental occupation for the flags. Their business would be to wave and flap. For the supreme authority in Africa would be vested in Mr. Wells's International Commission.

Now a national flag is itself the symbol of supreme authority. When the Union Jack flies over a district, it is a notice that all the military and naval power, and all the resources of the British Empire will, if necessary, be employed to resist any challenge to that supreme authority. The British flag has not braved the battle and the breeze for a thousand years, has not hung in the smoke of Trafalgar, and soared in the glare of Delhi and signalled beneficent rule and protection and prosperous order to the inhabitants of a quarter of the globe—it has not done this in the past to be condemned henceforth to flutter idly in the circumambient air, and flirt with the passing zephyrs. Yet this is the function that Mr. Wells assigns to the British flag in his African constitution.

Does he say that he would allow it some measure of authority, and some privileges, in the regions over which

it waves and flaps? How much authority and what privileges? Would Mr. Wells allow it a small measure of authority, a few privileges, and very limited powers of jurisdiction? Then he makes the British flag ridiculous in our own colonies. Would he allow it a large measure of authority, many privileges, and large powers of jurisdiction? Then he brings the British flag into constant collision with the supreme authority of his Commission. Who is to define what privileges, what scope of action, what measure of authority, are to be permitted to the British Government in the administration of our African possessions? Mr. Wells would doubtless reply that this must be left to the decision of his Commission. Surely he must see that the mere attempt to arrive at any workable agreement would scatter his Commission to the winds.

But Mr. Wells himself goes on to expose the mischievous impracticability of his proposed constitution for Africa, by likening it to the constitution of the United States. The stability of the United States government is assured by the national flag which floats over them all, and has equal authority over them all. The Stars and Stripes does not merely wave and flap over America in submission to the rulings of an International Commission, and alongside half-a-dozen other languid strips of bunting. The lively, vigorous Stars and Stripes waves to some purpose at Washington. It means business. It binds all the people of the different States in the defence of their country, and gives them all equal protection against external assault, because they are all equally citizens of that country, and have common national interests, which are in many ways opposed to the interests of other nations.

Mr. Wells's African constitution would be unstable,

because the inhabitants of its different States would not be united under one supreme centralized government, as are the people of the United States at Washington; would not live under one common national flag giving them equal protection as citizens of one common country, having national interests in common. They would not be united in the common defence of their possessions, or probably about anything at all. Mr. Wells's analogy is not merely transparently false; it proves, most aptly and absolutely, the radical unsoundness and impracticability of his whole scheme; and incidentally of all kindred schemes for the International government of diverse races and peoples. I will credit Mr. Wells with the perspicacity to recognize this very obvious fact.

In any case, Mr. Wells would set up a divided authority all over Africa, than which no form of government could be more unstable, more certain to provoke irritation, confusion, and strife. Internationalism would be found again to bring forth its natural fruits, as soon as it attempted to claim supreme authority. And sooner or later, the soldier would have to be called in—which is what we all wish to avoid.

I am far from saying that temporary international commissions, with strictly defined, quite limited, and quite subordinate powers, might not be beneficially appointed to report upon, and perhaps to take action, in certain sanitary, medical, and other matters, wherein all the nations, and all the inhabitants of Africa have a common interest. But this is a very different thing from a permanent surrender of all the main functions of government to a super-potent International Commission, such as Mr. Wells proposes to establish.

Meantime I beseech Mr. Wells, for the sake of the

native populations, for the sake of the peaceful development of the dark continent, and above all, for the sake of his own reputation as a political thinker, to leave the international affairs of Africa in the hands of our diplomatists at the Foreign Office. It is true that, unlike his Bolshevik friends, they have often shown themselves to be not "profoundly wise." Occasionally they have made mistakes, as we must all sorrowfully acknowledge. It is true that they are "limited, uneducated" persons, compared with the present rulers of Russia, who "know all about social and economic questions," and who in all other matters are absolutely "beyond the limit." It is true again, that our diplomatists have not Mr. Wells's "clarity" of judgment, and that they have a different standard of "probable honesty" from that erected by the Soviets. Our Foreign Office officials are guilty of all these deficiencies. But they have the immense advantage of being "crudely ignorant" in Mr. Wells's "world of modern ideas." And this of itself is a high qualification for handling affairs in any part of the globe.

I am, however, a little dubious about asking Mr. Wells to relax his grip upon the situation in Africa. For, with his passion for getting grips upon situations, no continent is safe from his superintendence. He may next tighten his grasp upon Europe, and stretch it over Asia, and South America, and the Solomon Islands—so named, I believe, because the inhabitants are wise enough to devote themselves exclusively to the study of the Book of Proverbs, and to eschew social and economic questions, and what goes on in "the world of modern ideas." It follows from this, that most of them are even more "limited and uneducated," more "crudely ignorant" than our Foreign Office Staff. Indeed the Solo-

mon Islanders know next to nothing of "what really matters in real politics." The Solomon Islands would therefore appear to offer Mr. Wells a situation full of possibilities, and I am apprehensive that he may be tempted to get his next grip upon them. And I feel sure he will again prescribe International hot water as a remedy for their social evils.

We all remember how delightfully Mr. Wells prophesied to us about machines, and how vividly he foretold the war in the air. Would that he had remained content with prophesying about machines! Unfortunately he went on to prophesy about mankind. Now machines offer a relatively safe subject to prophesy about, for, within rather wide limits, they may be trusted to behave in a manner that approaches to the design of their constructor. But mankind are not so docile as machines. I know not what may have been the design of the Constructor of mankind, but I am sometimes driven to question whether mankind are behaving in strict accordance with it. The behaviour of machines is tolerably consistent, but the behaviour of mankind is obstinately erratic, and tragically baffling. For this reason, mankind are a very risky and elusive subject for prophecy, and Mr. Wells may well be excused if he sometimes goes astray in his predictions about them.

I cannot, however, agree with Mr. Archibald Spofforth, who, in his recently published "Noted English Seers," places Mr. Wells rather below Old Moore in the rank of prophets. It may be true, as Mr. Spofforth argues, that Old Moore has lately been more successful in making lucky shots at futurity. But this is due, not so much to his professional skill in prophecy, as to mere chance; and Mr. Wells, who, it must be owned, has been a little unfortunate in his recent premonstra-

tions, may confidently look to the law of averages to put him on a level with Old Moore in this respect. We must also remember that Old Moore has been longer in the business than Mr. Wells, and may well have profited from his many past failures to make events tally with his predictions. Under one of his hieroglyphics for 1919, the elder prophet cautiously remarks, "Old Moore does not say that what we see in the picture will be brought about." This modest and judicious attitude towards his own prognostications, is one that might be imitated by most prophets with great advantage to their reputations. Would that all our social prophets had the wisdom and candour of Old Moore, and an equal courage to avow that what they fondly dream may not be realized!

Vagueness and wiliness are, I take it, the chief necessary qualities for any one who sets up as a prophet, and Mr. Wells is a little lacking in both these prime requisites for successful augury. However this may be, I cannot but think that Mr. Spofforth, in his lengthy comparison of these two noted English seers, has done Mr. Wells an injustice when he estimates him as being, on the whole, rather less trustworthy in dealing with world-problems than Old Moore. I am convinced that Time will vindicate Mr. Wells, and that he will finally be adjudged a position amongst the major prophets, no less worthy, dignified, renowned, and unassailable, than that occupied by Old Moore.

When we come to the matter of style and method, it must be conceded that Mr. Wells cannot compete with Old Moore in the management of majestic imagery, and flamboyant zoology. I have a weakness for gorgeous symbolism in prophecy. I doat upon scarlet ladies of

Babylon who frolic with seven-headed beasts; upon great red dragons with crowns on their heads, who stand waiting to devour newly-born babes; upon chimeras with four faces, who go upon four sides, with wheels full of eyes; upon bears whose ribs are in their mouths and who joust with four-headed winged leopards while other strange creatures with freakish and superfluous horns butt into the fray—the whole menagerie forming a kind of sacred jig-saw puzzle for the edification of devout theological amateurs; who, after enormous pains in putting the pieces together, find that it turns out to mean exactly what they wish it to mean. This is the only kind of prophecy that has met with any great success in foreshadowing large world-movements and events. Ten to one, something or somebody will come along to justify our forecast, if we only make it sufficiently obscure, and wait long enough.

If Mr. Wells has anything profound to tell us about the future of Bolshevism, or Africa, or the Solomon Islands, cannot we persuade him to adopt this approved method of prophecy? It offers so many chances of hedging, if the prophet finds he has made a mistake. Better still, remembering with gratitude his shrewd and penetrating studies of character in "Tono-Bungay" and "Mr. Polly," and the many other brilliant and delightful things that have come from his pen, cannot we persuade him to doff his tattered mantle of prophetic Internationalism, and relate to us some history of the English men and women whom he knows so well? I have every sympathy with his prophetic impulses. Indeed, I have prophetic impulses myself, as I fear is too evident. But future events being so capricious, I try to restrict myself to that less showy kind of prophecy,

which hazards a conjecture, that astronomical and other conditions being favourable, the sun will rise to-morrow morning.

I have examined Mr. Wells's scheme for the International government of Africa with some circumspection, not because there is the least danger of its being adopted by our statesmen, but because it exhibits the defects and fallacies of most of these schemes for the International government of mankind. Their common defect is that they are built in vacuous space, where there are no reactions, and where many of them hang together well enough. When they are brought down to the solid earth, amongst actual conditions, and are applied to living men and women, they tumble to pieces.

For instance, when a general settlement is made of African affairs and African territory, surely the South Africans, who have chiefly helped to win for us the German colonies, will have a large say in the matter. It is they, and not Mr. Wells, who have the right to counsel British policy in South and Central Africa. Mr. Wells leaves their aims and wishes out of the account. It is convenient for him to ignore them, because they would upset all his plans. Yet, granted even that his airy scheme were practicable, it could not even be started without the consent and co-operation of our South African empire. Any attempt to internationalize Africa would probably meet with opposition from the South African government, would increase disaffection in that colony, would cause sharp division in the Imperial councils, and would tend to split to pieces the British Empire. What would it matter if the British Empire were split to pieces, so long as Mr. Wells's plans are not upset? So he brings out his brand-new International constitution and, like most other Inter-

national projectors, carefully closes his eyes to the actual main facts and conditions. Thus does Mr. Wells get a grip of the situation in Africa.

The fallacy of most of these International projectors is, that in looking after what they suppose to be the common ultimate interests of all mankind, they forget or ignore that all mankind have separate personal interests, and separate national interests. But the majority of mankind will never trouble themselves about the ultimate interests of all mankind, or about anything but their immediate personal interests. Now, these definite, discernible, personal interests are clearly divergent from, and are opposed to most of the personal interests of the majority of mankind, and to most of the international interests of mankind. Equally, the main national interests of any people are clearly divergent from, and are opposed to, the main national interests of other peoples, and to many international interests. And, as I have already shown, this opposition of interests alternately takes the form of commercial conflict, and of actual war. If universal wisdom and the League of Nations prevail, and war ceases from this time forth, then commercial warfare will be all the more fierce and deadly. And the victims of commercial warfare in the past, from tuberculosis and other diseases, and from toil, oppression, and starvation, if they could be counted, would immensely outnumber the victims of war in the field.

But why not do away with both classes of victims in the future? Ah, to be sure, why not? Why not bring in an International Law making criminal all competition and collision of interests, and put the whole matter under the superintendence of Mr. Wells? Meantime, let us seek to reduce, by every means in our pow-

er, the number of both classes of victims. But let us not think that the coming commercial war will not exact its heavy toll and cruel sacrifice of life. Let us not dare to play thimble-rig with inexorable facts, or to set booby-traps for the Eternal.

The majority of mankind have only very rare, indefinite, and casual international interests. Undoubtedly it is to the interests of us all to live in a wise and perfect world, and to hasten the time when we may be all citizens of such a world, under a wise and perfect International government. Meantime, the interest which an Englishman has in sustaining and strengthening the fabric of the British Empire, is greater and more compulsive than the interest which he has in establishing a world commonwealth. It is also an interest which is discernible, immediate, palpable. For in the present condition of things, it is certain that a world commonwealth cannot be established without a long intervening period of revolution, chaos, and bloodshed. And how can an Englishman be sure that after the general hurly-burly of a social and political world earthquake, he may not find himself in much worse circumstances under a Red flag which waves and flaps over the universe, than under the Union Jack which gave him security to make his way in a prosperous and united British Empire. His present sure half-loaf is better than a very doubtful whole one; and his chicken stewing in a British pot, is worth many more than two of the elusive Birds of Paradise that flutter in the bushes of the International Garden.

Further, Internationalists always make the mistake of assuming that their schemes will be worked by perfectly wise, honest, unselfish statesmen, superintending a perfectly wise, honest, unselfish community.

Again, they are living in a vacuum, where there are no reactions. Mr. Wells perceives that our Foreign Office is filled with incapable, uneducated, crudely ignorant bunglers, like Mr. Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil. He would hustle them into obscurity, and replace them by statesmen who would quickly "reconstruct" this much mismanaged earth, and turn it into an International Utopia—presumably by a process similar to that by which his Bolshevik friends have "reconstructed" the Russian Empire, and made it such a delightful place for all classes to live in.

We all thankfully recognize that in the past four years, many British Labour members have shown themselves to be able, constructive statesmen and staunch patriots, who have rendered immense services to the country and the Allied cause. Some of them have administered Government departments with conspicuous ability and foresight. The present Food Controller is only one of many Labour statesmen, to whom an enormous public debt of gratitude is due. Many of these Labour statesmen will assuredly be offered responsible positions in the next government. I see no reason why a Labour member should not be Foreign Minister, given the opportunity to show that he is qualified for the office. But by their general training and experience, Labour members will surely be more profitably employed in departments that deal with internal affairs. From the nature of its operations, the Foreign Office should not be occupied by a statesman who avowedly represents a class, but by one who speaks for the whole nation.

Mr. Wells would eject that "pretentious bluffer," Lord Robert Cecil, and would have our foreign affairs administered on International principles under instruc-

tions from Labour. He assumes that in Africa, as in Russia, his International scheme would be worked by "profoundly wise," honest, unselfish statesmen, with no interests to serve but those of the International State. He also assumes that the whole population of Africa, black, white, and colored, would wisely and unselfishly cooperate with their beneficent rulers to the same beneficent ends. No wonder these International States are such charming places to live in, and their projectors so popular!

And having arranged things so happily for everybody, Mr. Wells, who sternly rebukes "flag-wagging" on behalf of the British Empire, unfurls a brand-new spacious banner of his own device, the Sun of Africa, and wags and waves it lustily over the continent that he has so suddenly and marvellously regenerated by the simple process of giving it a paper International constitution.

How easy it is to reform the world and make everybody happy and wise on paper!

From whence does Mr. Wells propose to obtain that constant supply of wise, unselfish, honest statesmen, who alone could give permanent security in Africa or anywhere else? He would doubtless reply, from the ranks of Labour. Is he sure that even there he might not find "pretentious bluffers," who, though not so "crudely ignorant" as Lord Robert, and much better "acquainted with social and economic questions," and with "everything that really matters in real politics," might not be endowed with more than a very scanty measure of the "probable honesty" and "profound wisdom" which have been so conspicuously displayed by his friends who are regenerating Russia on International principles?

Has Mr. Wells noticed the disquieting fact, that when Labour has found a leader with powers of constructive statesmanship, and foresight, and balanced judgment, and who therefore can promise it only moderate and possible rations of happiness and comfort—has Mr. Wells noticed how apt Labour is to throw him aside in favour of successive leaders who promise it larger and larger, and ever more impossible, rations of happiness and comfort? Who are the men who finally come to the top, and are inevitably chosen to carry out such vast and violent revolutionary changes as those which Mr. Wells advocates? Are they ever responsible statesmen, or even capable politicians? Are they men of balanced judgment and unselfish aims? Are they men of probity in public and private affairs; men who in finance could be trusted with the cash in a shop till, much less with a national exchequer; men who in government of their fellows could be trusted to administer the affairs of a village, much less direct the destinies of a great Empire?

The change to Internationalism that Mr. Wells proposes could not be realized without an upheaval which would break up our present constitution; and he must know that in that upheaval it would not be our sane and moderate Labour politicians who would be the chosen directors of the whirlwind, and lords of the mad misrule and destruction that would follow.

But Mr. Wells puts forth his International scheme as a summary of what Labour proposes and purposes. I know not what authority Mr. Wells has to proclaim himself as the spokesman of Labour in the matter of the future government of Africa, and in other large matters that concern the integrity and safety of the British Empire. I know not how far his wholesale and

prolific fallacies represent the considered opinions of Labour. Labour has lately shown itself sharply divided on many national and international questions. I cannot think that the great body of Labour has so little political sagacity, as to hand over to International misdirection and confusion, those African possessions in which it has so large and fruitful an interest.

I will not believe that Labour, which, throughout the last agonizing four years has drained its blood and sweat to cement the British Empire; which has racked its strength and manhood in aching, ceaseless toil; which has sent forth in hundreds of thousands, its nameless unrewarded heroes and martyrs to endure unendurable hardships and sufferings; which has dedicated itself to loathsome miseries and tortures, to savage butcheries and mutilations, to terror, disease, captivity, and horrible forms of death; which has done all this in a spirit of such great resolve and cheerful self-sacrifice, that never has there been a moment in the long large crescendo of our past, when a man of our race could kindle with such exultant pride to cry out, "I am of this high lineage! I am the dear kinsman of the men who have done these things! I am of the breed and blood royal of these smiths and miners and shopboys and porters and weavers and ploughmen! I am a fellow citizen with them in that great commonwealth, which they have rescued and re-purchased from destruction, and have established it on all the lands and all the seas, to be a large, rich heritage for their children and their children's children, till the last wave shall beat upon its shores, till the last breath shall be drawn through the nostrils of their seed, till the last echo of their resounding deeds shall have died away from the memory of mankind!"—I cannot believe that Labour will now

set itself to undo the stupendous work it has accomplished in the last four years, that having built up the British Empire and buttressed and fortified it on all sides, Labour will now pull down the stones its own hands have laid, and give over to domestic treason and internal disruption, the fortress that it has made impregnable to foreign malice and assault.

I will not believe it. It is not possible.

Forbid it, you its true leaders, who have kept your troth to England, who have not turned aside to traffic with wordsters and palterers, who, through all doubts and perils, have held your fellows resolute and inflexible to our triumphant goal! Hold them still resolute and inflexible to preserve and possess through long years of peace what they have won by the anguish and sacrifices of war! Protect them still from the crazy sophistries and treacheries of their busy enemies within their own ranks! You, who have rallied them to defeat the German hosts, safeguard them now from defeating themselves!

Forbid it, you have nursed our stricken and mended our broken ones, and put new blood into their veins and new muscle into their limbs, and sent them forth, addressed again to the interminable fight, with all the old stubborn race pluck and spunk! Forbid it, you yeowomen of England, and all you who have trained your fingers to strange new tasks, and stood so manfully behind your men, and put shells into their guns, and fledged their wings, and fed their wants, and, in countless unaccustomed ways, have shown yourselves their equals in tireless endeavour, unshaken fortitude, and patient endurance to the end. Now that your voices will be heard in the councils of the nation, raise them against this parcelling out of our great rich free-

hold into disordered plots for these International jerry-builders to gamble away!

Forbid it, you who have torn out pieces of your living flesh, husbands and lovers and sons, and thrown them upon the unblessed carnage heap, and now sit, widowed and desolate, by hearths that will always be cold and cheerless, though the logs burn never so brightly; and in homes that will always be dark and empty, though you fill them with feasting and laughter!

Forbid it, you who have spent haggard days and nights in the stench and mire, in filthy habourage with rats and feculence; sleepless and shelterless under the fire of hell, and breathed upon by choking green poison fumes; you who have blistered and staggered in the white heat and stagnant noon of Asian deserts, or languished in feverous African swamps, and, fainting unto death, have yet pursued and conquered. You who have dug the graves of your smitten and slaughtered brothers, wherever you have marched and toiled and bled, will you come home to dig the grave of that Empire whose bounds you have enlarged and established, and will you cast its remains into dust and dishonour? You who have gashed and ripped out the entrails of the foul German monster, will you come home to stab and dismember the Mother who bore you?

Forbid it, you who have kept icy vigils on the deep, peering into the treacherous murk, in jeopardy every moment of blasting annihilation, stark frozen to the marrow, and frozen all without you and all within, save that ever-burning sacrificial flame at your heart's core! Forbid it, you our stout fishermen, who have fished for lurking terrors, and hauled up iron-coated monsters, stored with murder and destruction! Forbid it, you our dauntless merchant crews, breastplate of all our defence,

who have furrowed your course through crowded death-traps, and kept for us the sovereignty of the seas! Look that you keep it for us still! Renew and re-swear and swear again your irrevocable oath, that these pirates and assassins shall be chased from our ships and shores, and that all our ocean ways shall be swept free of them! Forbid that the Ship of our State, which holds all our treasure, should be scuttled by its own crew, and wrecked in wild unlighted gulfs on the uncharted rocks of barren International shores!

Forbid it, you legions of our wounded, whose bodies have been mangled and pierced and broken that England might be whole; remnants of humanity, who, in your honoured livery of pensioned service to her, shall go lamed and loitering to the end of your days; spectators of the cheerful bustle of daily life that you shall never share! Forbid that your country's body should be torn by internal dissension, and broken and gangrened by mad class strife!

Forbid it, you our maltreated banished ones, captives and bondslaves of imbruted taskmasters! You who marched away in the red and tan glow of health, whose cheeks now wear the waxen pallor of mortality; frost-bitten, naked, tortured in the icy hell-blasts of Mitzau; macerated in the burning hell-depths of German salt mines—O England, avenge them! Shed no tear for their wrongs beyond all tears! Pity has drained her eyes, and Mercy is dead! Make thy heart as the nether millstone, sharpen on it thy swift sword, and Strike! Strike! Strike! Spare not one of them that spared not thy martyred exiles! Let not one of them escape that did these things to thy sons! O England, avenge them!—You, who were ground down by the pestle of remorseless savagery in the mortar of unutterable misery,

and put to abominable uses; starved, beaten, spat upon, crippled, defiled, defaced out of human likeness; wan shadows of yourselves, poor ghosts and skeletons of men, if there is speech left between your wasted lips, say now a word to us! You whose strength was sapped and spent for us, urge us to take fresh strength from the memory of all that you endured! Forbid that we should be enslaved and driven about by the tyrannous oppression of false doctrines, that our national will and purpose should be sapped by sedition, and envy, and discord among ourselves!

Forbid it, most of all, you who have fallen, and are discharged from all warfare; men of all ranks and stations and callings, who were equal in fearless acceptance of death, and are now equal in lavish ascription of deathless renown; you, who, at our summons, gathered yourselves from all parts of the earth, and are now scattered and spilt in the dust of three continents. Gather yourselves again in solemn concourse, and pass before us in troops and troops, and thousands, and tens of thousands—Ah, will the sum of you never be told? And so young, the many of you! Lithe striplings, founts of bursting youth, darlings of your homes, and fondlings of your womenfolk; side by side with fathers and husbands stricken down in their hard-mettled manhood, and with seasoned veterans whom age had not touched—all contemporary now, all dishabited, cut off—Great fellowship of our dead, whom neither the years nor the void shall dis sever from us, forbid that we should be dis severed from ourselves by factions and rancours; draw us into communion with you, and into closer comradeship with each other, to finish the task you committed to us of welding and soldering together this vast commonwealth! Spread your healing hands

over our divisions and enmities; move amongst our counsels and sway us to unity of purpose and effort! You whose eyes are closed, and yet see all things clearly, show us the path of national safety and felicity, that, with sure unhesitating steps, we may pursue it in the troubled days to come! Go before us in our way and urge us to steadfast loyalty to ourselves! Forbid us to stray in vagabond, distracted allegiance to International despotism, and alliance with alien anarchies! Forbid us to throw the title-deeds of our Empire into the flames of insurrection and revolt! Forbid us to tear up that great bond of national partnership and brotherhood which you signed with your blood!

I cannot think that Labour, which, throughout the war, has followed its sure instinct of Patriotism to the achievement of such splendid results, will now be cozened to abjure its faith and citizenship in the land that it has loved and saved, and made great and powerful. Behold, then, you working men of England, the habitation that Internationalism is preparing for you in that Promised Land of the future, where the blind lead the blind, and the deaf bawl crazy misdirections to the deaf, and madmen are the keepers of the mad; where thieves rob thieves, and starvation preys upon hunger, and murder slits the throat of murder.

But we are deeply pledged to the recognition of Nationality, and to the fostering of Patriotism, as a principle of our future policy and action, wherever our power and influence extend. From the beginning of the war, our statesmen, one after the other, have declared that we have been fighting to restore and preserve the integrity of the small struggling nations; to sort them out in different races and breeds; to gather them within well-marked borders; to guarantee them the right of

self-government; to give them the means of working out their own destinies as distinct national communities, with their own laws, customs, forms of religion, and lines of future development. Is it not plain that if our war aims are achieved, we are setting free incalculable forces of Patriotism to consolidate each of these nations, and to crystallize their scattered atoms in adherence to their own government?

Do we suppose that as each nation settles down in order in its own territory, develops its resources, increases in population, and grows in prosperity, that its national aims and interests will not also be enlarged and specialized, and tend to become more pressing, and more encroaching? Do we suppose that, as its government becomes more stable and confirmed and powerful, it will not also become a stronger engine for securing and advancing the separate aims and interests of the nation that it represents? Do we suppose that these young nations, for whom we are now standing sponsors, will not grow up with wills and ambitions and interests of their own; and this in proportion to their racial purity, and to their capacity for self-government; and all the more because they are young and vigorous? Do we suppose that they will not use their newly and dearly bought freedom to further their separate national interests and aims and ambitions? Why, because some of us have a whimsy for Internationalism, should we think that the prevailing impulses of mankind will be arrested and reversed, and their conflicting movements be regulated and harmonized by the blather of our tongues?

If the preponderating voice and power of Labour is now to direct our policy towards Internationalism, let us make haste to repudiate all the declarations that we have made of our aims in this war. For it is clear that

Internationalism and the right of a people to self-determination are contradictions in terms. Nor, judging from its present manifestations, is Internationalism likely to make the world a safe place for democracy, or a safe place for anything or anybody that is worthy of preservation. The only kind of International rule that, up to the present, has shown even the smallest promise of enforcing obedience to its decrees, is the International rule which the Kaiser set out to establish, and which may stand as a warning to the other iconoclasts who are seeking by quite other methods to introduce equal confusion into the world's affairs. "By opposite means," says Montaigne, "we reach the same ends."

I have defined Internationalism as an attempt to subvert and supplant the established governments of the world, and to persuade the working classes of each nation that they owe their chief allegiance, not to their own country and its laws, but to the presidents and decrees of revolutionary tribunals established in the large capitals of the world. If Internationalism does not mean this, what does it mean?

It is imagined that these immense and radical changes in the constitution of human society can be brought about by gradual and peaceful means. Granted unlimited time, and a change in the instincts and passions of mankind, subduing them all to universal wisdom, sweet reasonableness, and unselfishness, it is possible that the ideals of Internationalists and Revolutionary Socialists may be realized. But what is there, in our experience of the actual world wherein we live, to lead us to think that the instincts and passions of average mankind will be magically and swiftly changed, that their standards of behaviour towards each other,

whether as individuals or nations, will be magically and swiftly raised, and their material conditions magically and swiftly improved, so as to render such a consummation possible? Is it not certain that these continued attempts to substitute International class government for separate national government, will lead to endless outbreaks of smouldering internecine war, dissipating all our national energies, and ending perhaps in another world-wide conflagration?

I may be told by some gentle theorists that Internationalism does not mean what I have defined it to mean, that is merely an effusion of muddled, balmy amiability—a tumbler of mild altruism mixed with a teaspoonful of weak patriotism, or a tumbler of weak Patriotism flavoured with tincture of universal benevolence. We may leave these Laodoceans to stir their tepid mixture in what proportions they choose, not troubling how much they water it down, or whether the dregs of their Patriotism settle at the bottom, or the scum of their Internationalism floats at the top.

Doubtless Internationalism means different things to its various professors. If Internationalism means no more than the promotion of friendly relations between all the different peoples, the diffusion of goodwill and brotherliness, the suppression of national prejudices and hatreds, the desire for fair dealing in all foreign transactions, the settlement of difficulties and disputes by peaceful means—if this is Internationalism, then there is no more fervid Internationalist than myself. But surely all these things are much more likely to be fostered and accomplished by separate stable governments, each chosen to represent the interests and claims of its own idiomorphic people, than by an International tribunal set up to represent the class interests of a fraction

of each of the nations. What form of government could in the end be more shift, despotic, cruel, and impotent for any constructive work than such a tribunal?

At this moment, when the guns and bells and cheers of victory are echoing to each other, and the air is throbbing with our triumph, our one great fear is that our routed enemy will be unable to compose a stable government to treat with us, but will welter in a chaos of Internationalism and Anarchy. And then the soldier will have to be called in again—which is what we all wish to avoid.

The world's first urgent need is for strong, ordered, separate national governments, supported by the undivided allegiance of their respective peoples. My friend, Mr. William Archer, says he knows many men in his own circle of acquaintance who would more willingly die for an International State than for a national one. Surely we have had enough bloodshed for the present. But if these enthusiasts force the International movement into action, they will find ample opportunities for securing martyrdom, and Mr. William Archer's circle of acquaintance, though diminished, will not, it is to be hoped, suffer any inconsolable loss by their deletion from it. *Dulce et decorum est contra patriam mori* is a strangely perverted maxim to be heard from the lips of Englishmen, when hundreds of thousands of their countrymen have lately died that they may live to utter crazy treason to their memories.

Whosoever opens the gates of Internationalism to his fellow-citizens, leads them not to the gay garden Paradise of their dreams, but to a darksome, quaking bog that scarcely yet offers sure ground to a single footfall, and will not for generations to come, bear the trampling legions of humanity.

For all this, it is possible that we are being swept towards Internationalism. It may be that the Eternal purposes to drive the frenzied peoples before Him, helter-skelter in terror-stricken multitudes, stumbling and treading each other under foot through blind mazes and barren wastes; till the vessels of modern civilization are broken, and its garments rent to rags; till man's life becomes as cheap as beast's; till after long years of self-plunder, self-oppression and self-defeat, mankind find a large pleasant place where they may begin to lay the foundations of their goodly new civilization.

Who that has surveyed the huddling disorder and dirty aimless ugliness that sprawl over parts of the earth which were once as the garden of the Lord, and are now the nesting haunts where fraud, corruption, hog-bellied greed and smug stupidity, ignorance, sloth, misery, and disease bring forth after their kind—who that has looked round upon it, has not sometimes wished that one fierce levin flash might strike it and blast it all out of being? Who that has a brain to think and a heart to grieve, does not sympathize with those aims of Socialism which are constructive and attainable by the present races of men, and are not plain conspiracies to rob the thrifty, the industrious, and the healthy, thereby to provide national endowment for the improvident, the lazy, the foolish, the diseased, and the vicious, giving all these a chartered right of unlimited breeding?

Accordingly, we find that, although much easier conditions of life have prevailed for the last two generations amongst the masses in this country, than amongst the masses in France and Germany, yet the recruiting returns show a higher proportion of Englishmen that

are physically unfit than of Frenchmen and Germans. Who would have thought it? Englishmen have been better fed, better clothed, better housed, than Frenchmen and Germans, and yet a larger proportion of them are physically unfit! How unwelcome are facts, when they contradict our whimsies!

Ponder it, you social reformers who are so vigorously "reconstructing" society. Face the fact, that easier general conditions of national existence have produced a larger proportion of physically unfit Englishmen and Englishwomen! Face it, for it is a fact! Dwell upon it, for it is a fact! Ask yourselves what it means, for it is a fact! Ponder it, you who are seeking to outwit Nature by legislating that the lazy, the foolish, the vicious, the diseased may be sheltered from the rigours of her stern decrees, that they may "have a good time" and multiply exceedingly, so that their seed may possess the earth—for a short, mad season. Have ready your midwives, to bring into the world them that will never be of any use when they are in it; and your schools and teachers to educate them that cannot learn; and your parsons to prepare for heaven them that are not fit for earth; and your grinning comedians to provide unwholesome amusement for them that are not capable of wholesome work; and your doctors to tinker their phthisicky frames that can only beget offspring of their own kind. Construct and reconstruct your whole cumbersome, complicated social incubator for hatching and cherishing wastrels! Then when it has broken down, let us go humbly to Nature and say, "We have followed our whimsies; we have obeyed them instead of obeying your laws. We have tried to impose our conditions upon you, instead of accepting the condi-

tions that you impose upon us. We will try to cheat you no longer. Tell us over your laws again, that we may obey them and live."

Can we affirm that even the constructive aims of Socialism, its many noble and beautiful ideals, are likely to be pursued and realized, or even understood, by the population around us, or by the children whom they will raise with tastes, manners, mental habits, and intellectual capacities on their own level? How can any collective state of society be above the general level of the men and women who form that society? And the general level of our tastes, our mental habits, the standards of our vocabulary, our capacity for wise thought and rational enjoyment, our favourite views of life—all these may, as I have already said, be accurately gauged by anyone who will pay a round of visits to our most popular theatres. There he may learn what our great populace really admires, really enjoys, really understands; how it employs its leisure, and in what ways and upon what level it will be likely to employ whatever further leisure it obtains from socialistic legislation. Another accurate measure of all these things may be taken by glancing at the kind of literature in demand at our bookstalls.

Here I am suddenly reminded that I am addressing the Minister of Education. Lest you should think me disrespectful, sir, if I do not occasionally offer you a few personal remarks, I will digress from my argument to congratulate you upon the fact that, although the modern English drama has recently met with some discouragement from you, modern English literature is receiving some attention in your schools.

"Who is the author of 'The Sorrows of Satan'?" was one of the questions that was recently put by one of

your teachers to a class of girls, the daughters of cottagers and labourers. With shame I confess that I am even more unversed in the writings of Miss Marie Corelli, than in the writings of Cicero. Indeed I have little further knowledge of Miss Corelli, than that in a recent case before the Stratford-on-Avon authorities, she claimed to be a Patriot. Her Patriotism was abundantly proved by the fact that she had been discovered hoarding food at the time of our greatest national necessity; and perhaps even more convincingly by her authorship of "The Sorrows of Satan," and other kindred masterpieces. For my part, I could wish that her Patriotism had taken other forms. Still, Miss Marie Corelli, like Cicero, is a representative both of Patriotism and Literature. It is pleasing to find in her, a happy conjunction of the same qualities that we find in Cicero. Doubtless, sir, this is the reason that some knowledge of her works is considered a desirable item in the "general education" of working girls in the system that you are administering with such confidence in its economic results. The future husbands of these girls may also look with confidence to the domestic results. And we who are willingly paying that these working girls may be taught such things as will tend to make them good wives, mothers and housekeepers, may feel additional confidence that our money is being well spent, when we learn that their teachers are training them to study the works of Miss Marie Corelli. We shall take another look at Mr. Punch's cartoon and rubbing our hands with satisfaction, exclaim with him, "Pass Education Bill! and All's Well!"

Small wonder it is that our teachers are asking for increased pay. Surely a grateful nation will consider no salary too high for instructors whose literary tastes

and general intellectual attainments are indicated by such questions as "Who was the author of 'The Sorrows of Satan'?" Would you consider it is an unpardonable curiosity, sir, if I asked, who teaches your teachers?

Miss Corelli's status in English literature being thus confirmed, sir, by your system of Popular Education, and your system of Popular Education being thus justified by the vogue of Miss Corelli amongst its teachers and scholars, we may now leave the matter of her individual Patriotism, and return to the consideration of that other kind of National Patriotism, which everywhere finds itself confronted and challenged by the gathering forces of Internationalism and revolutionary Socialism.

Patriotism, having saved our skins, and secured our daily bread and butter; having protected every home in England from the danger of foul violation and burning; having united and established our Empire and given us the hope and power of increasing future well-being and greatness—Patriotism having done all this for us, we are now asked to forswear and forsake it in favour of the political creed that has devastated and ruined Russia, and threatens to disintegrate and work havoc in Central Europe.

Will England, that through these past four years has saved herself by holding true to herself, be mad enough now to destroy herself by being false to herself?

A telegram, just received from Petrograd, says that "the Bolsheviks have passed a law that all single women over twenty are the property of the State, and all children over six weeks are to be handed to the State to be brought up and educated by the authorities. Complete disorder reigns, and a large number of women have

not found it possible to trace their babies." These rulers of Russia are they whom Mr. Wells finds "profoundly wise," and "shining clear," and "intimately acquainted with social and economic questions, and everything that really matters in real politics." Is not motherhood a social and economic question? Does it not lie at the root of most other social and economic questions? Is not its sanctity a thing that matters supremely in "real politics"? Is it not the well-spring of a nation's life? You English mothers, now that you have a choice of your rulers, will you choose such rulers as Mr. Wells recommends to you, who will not only rob all of us, even the poorest, of our material goods, but will also strip us bare of our more precious spiritual possessions?

I do not say that there is any immediate danger of Bolshevism being put into active working disorder in England. At present we are only dallying with its theories. I gladly own there is much sound common-sense in the heads of our working men, though I cannot allow, as Mr. Wells seems to claim, that all the wisdom and honesty in the community are to be found in the ranks of Labour, the rest of us being fools and idlers and thieves. We have won the war because the majority of our working men had the wisdom to follow and obey those of their leaders who had the instinct of Patriotism. We can win an even more glorious peace, if only our working men will have the wisdom to follow leaders who have the same instinct.

There before us, plain for every one of us to see and read, stand the two signposts, the one guiding us to Patriotism, the other to Internationalism. There is no third road. We must take the one or the other. Look into what abysmal depths and quagmires we are urged

by that finger which points us to Internationalism. See at the bottom, the hapless, hopeless masses of the Russian people, floundering in a putrid cesspool of blood and misery and disease, every man's hand in his neighbour's pocket, or at his neighbour's throat. Midway down the slope are yelling, turbulent, hungry crowds, fighting amongst themselves, and pushing each other head foremost towards the pit of destruction. And here at the top, on a platform under the signpost of Internationalism, are professional anarchists, bawling out their catchwords and phrases, alongside amiable theorists and doctrinaires, with rose-colored spectacles glued over their myopic eyes, as they demonstrate to the discontented and slothful and ignorant amongst us, that the filthy slough at the bottom is a fairyland of pure delight, and issue detailed instructions for reaching it.

There are many clear logical thinkers who are convinced Internationalists. But what is the use of convincing ourselves that the world is flat, as we easily may. There is much evidence to support the theory. What is the use of thinking clearly, if we think wrongly? Some of the clearest thinkers I have known, have been the wrongest thinkers. We all know men whose opinions we need not take the trouble to examine. We are sure from what we know of the constitution of their minds, that they must infallibly be wrong upon any subject. Their brains work upon facts with a reversed action. If we find they agree with us on any matter, at once we begin to question our own judgment. Just as there are some amongst us whose physical diathesis is adapted to catch any zymotic disease that may be raging, so there are others whose mental diathesis is adapted to catch any wrong opinion that may be raging. God has made them so, as Dr. Watts remarks with piercing insight,

thus accurately accounting for human, as well as for canine peculiarities. Let us leave these predestined Impossibilists in God's hands, for He alone is capable of dealing with them.

But there are also many thoughtful, large-hearted men, who advocate Internationalism from high, disinterested motives and genuine love of their kind. I would beg them to notice that Patriotism is an instinct, an emotion, a passion—not a political opinion. It is of little use to argue against it, and to show that it is guilty of follies and excesses, even of crimes. Nothing is more easy to prove than that Patriotism is fundamentally absurd and wrong. But it is a fact. It exists. It persists. We cannot destroy it.

If, by a decree of our will, International government could be firmly established all the world over to-night, Patriotism would spring up to-morrow morning, and begin to choke it. In scattered places, amongst cliques and sects and races, Patriotism would germinate, and spread, and take possession of men's hearts and wills, and bind together in separate communities, such of them as have common interests and aims and beliefs, till in a very short time it would be plain that International government could not command their obedience, or compose their differences. And then the soldier would have to be called in—which is what we all wish to avoid. When the soldier had done his work, we should find mankind segregated in new national groups, in new confines, under new flags, with new national aspirations and ambitions. And the more we changed this new order, the more it would remain the same thing.

It is a paradox, most annoying to theorists and doctrinaires, that Internationalism, which, by their showing, ought to reconcile mankind, does, as a matter of

fact, divide and antagonize mankind. I am speaking now of International government, or attempts at International government, symbolized by the International flag, and claiming allegiance to it, in opposition to Patriotic governments symbolized by national flags. I am not speaking of international intercourse and friendliness, and of good understandings between all the nations, and of international laws and treaties to attain such objects as may be for the general good, or for the good of several nations. Such international arrangements as these are obviously for the benefit of mankind, and we may hope to see a large and fruitful development of many of them.

But they are advantageous because they are avowedly contracted between separate nations, each under its own flag. They are practicable, and likely to be prosperous, to the extent that they recognize the principle of nationality. That is to say, they acknowledge the very plain fact, that while all the peoples have a few interests in common, and some of the peoples have many interests in common, yet all the peoples can never have all interests in common, but must necessarily be divided and opposed in their chief permanent interests.

Until Patriotism has welded and moulded a community into a corporate social organism, until it has unified and solidified groups of kindred human beings into separate nations, no effective friendly international transactions can take place. No benefits can come to humanity from Internationalism until Patriotism is already established and operative in each nation, and only in the degree that Patriotism is established and operative. International goodwill and kindness all the world over are what we all desire. But these can

only flow through the channels that Patriotism has already cut for them.

Will Internationalists please explain by what precise means concord, fellowship, and brotherhood can be promoted amongst the peoples, and their enmities disarmed, except by forms and measures decreed by separate, secure, national governments? Internationalism can only work for the welfare of mankind by the routes that Patriotism provides. Outside Patriotism, Internationalism does but gather together a rabble that embroils itself in ceaseless confusion, hatred, and anarchy. One glance at the world's present distractions shows this plainly enough. Let us think out this matter clearly and thoroughly, for the world's peace depends upon our rightly understanding it. Therefore let us think it out, once, and twice, and thrice, and yet again. I am not speaking now to them whose eyes cannot see the clearest facts, and whose minds cannot receive the plainest truths.

Internationalism that claims allegiance to its flag, and works to supplant national government, is always and everywhere a centrifugal, disintegrating, destructive force, tending to the insecurity of mankind. Patriotism is always and everywhere a centripetal, constructive force, which by binding each separate nation in unity of aim and interest, makes its government an effective responsible instrument to deal with neighbouring governments, and to conduct international affairs with smoothness and decision. Therefore Patriotism, always and everywhere tends to the general security of mankind. An equal diffusion of universal benevolence is a sure cause of disorder and strife. Like every other assertion of equality, it reacts and provokes inequalities. God won't have it.

Why should we try to focus our amiability on everybody and everything, in the delusion that we are guiding the earth into milder realms of space, where perpetual sunshine reigns, and where everybody's circumstances will be easy and pleasant?

It is indeed painfully true, that we, who are denizens of this inferior planet in a quite insignificant solar system, have all too much reason for dissatisfaction with our beggarly circumscribed position in a universe of boundless dimensions and possibilities. Our conditions of life are pitiably hard and uncomfortable, when compared with those of the inhabitants of the planets that circle round Sirius. In each of these worlds everybody has a real "good time." The picture palaces and popular revues are of inconceivable magnificence, and sixpenny novels, by writers possessing imaginations even more gorgeous than Miss Corelli, are sold for a penny. The working day is rigorously restricted to six hours, and the weekly holiday, compulsory in all occupations, begins every Thursday evening at five, and lasts till the following Wednesday morning at ten. Unbroken security, prosperity, and happiness are maintained by a comprehensive system of State Insurance, which covers every member of the community from all damage, loss, evil, or misfortune arising from every cause whatsoever, including his own follies, extravagances, and wicked actions. All other desirable things are showered upon the lucky inhabitants in the same reckless profusion. Many of these advantages are unquestionably due to the inordinate amount of space which Sirius has managed to grab for himself and his satellites. But some credit must also be given to the admirable system of Pópular Education (more enlight-

ened even than your own, sir), which is enforced in all the regions under his sway.

Seeing how enviable are the conditions of life in the Sirian planets, there is much to be said for throwing in our lot with their inhabitants, and thus abolishing the glaring inequalities which we may well resent when we compare our situation with theirs. The report of the Interstellar Commission, appointed to consider the matter, with a view to the removal of these iniquitous inequalities, is full of pregnant suggestions. It recommends that, as soon as Internationalism is securely established on our own planet, steps should be taken to amalgamate our own solar system with the planetary system of Sirius, and to consolidate all the interests of all the inhabitants of both systems. Doubtless this suggestion will be carried into effect, when we have attended to the few minor matters that are now engaging our attention.

We must not allow ourselves to be daunted by the magnitude of the conception. After all, it is only the legitimate development of our present Internationalist aims. Nor, so far as I can see, will it be any more difficult of achievement. We may take some assurance from the fact that the most prominent members of the Interstellar Commission are men who, for many years past, have been engineering the International movement on this earth. If I am any judge of character, these are not men who would be likely to embark us in any risky enterprise.

We must proceed with great deliberation and prudence. We must eschew all violent methods. We must conduct our operations so as not to cause any undue concussions and disturbances in other planetary systems.

We must remember that, most probably, their inhabitants, like ourselves, have a preference for an easy, quiet life. Our first care must to inquire how this desirable amalgamation of our solar system with that of Sirius, can be brought about by peaceful means. It is considered by the Interstellar Commission, that our object will be most easily and effectively gained by voting for it, in the same way that we are voting for Internationalism, and in the same way that we voted there should be no war with Germany.

Of course voting is the method that we all greatly prefer, and generally adopt, in settling such matters. I question, however, whether voting can be relied upon to avert the danger of a terrific celestial catastrophe, when the two systems approach each other. If there were a collision, both systems and all they contain would inevitably be reduced to gas. It would be a thousand pities if a scheme that promises so many blessings to mankind, were reduced to mere gas. However, the more far-seeing Interstellarists are aware of this danger, and are providing a garden hose of unusual diameter, which will be ready to turn on at the first sign of a conflagration. Still, I have my doubts.

Then, again, the Sirian populations may have extravagant ideas of the terms on which the amalgamation can be arranged. They may take a selfish view of their own interests, and refuse to make those necessary concessions which, in justice to ourselves, we must demand if our conditions of life are to be levelled up to theirs, and perfect equality secured all round throughout the two systems. The whole matter needs our most careful consideration.

Is it any more foolish to imagine that an amalgamation of our solar system with Sirius can be brought

about without a transcendent celestial catastrophe, than to imagine that an amalgamation of all the nations of the earth can be brought about without a transcendent terrestrial catastrophe? Are the Interstellarists any more visionary, impracticable, and deluded than the Internationalists? Now that the malignant comet of war has struck the nations, and sent them reeling out of their orbits in wild oscillations, what madness is it to call upon the yet more destructive force of Internationalism, to throw them into yet more violent collisions with each other, and to break up our whole terrestrial system in anarchy and ruin?

What madness is it that urges Englishmen to intrigue against their own country, to hate and renounce their citizenship, and to clamour for such privileges and liberties and rights as are now enjoyed in Russia, and through all Central and Eastern Europe? Has this kind, stupid, blundering mother of ours provided for us so badly, left us so small an inheritance, with such beggarly hopes and honours and possessions, that we must make haste to disown her, and to proclaim ourselves the pauper bastards of promiscuous intercourse between drunken seditions and International whoredoms?

But, it may be asked, if Patriotism is one of the universal instincts, how is it that so many thoughtful intelligent Englishmen are to be found who do not possess it?

They do possess it—the vast majority of them. Even Mr. Wells had fits of temporary Patriotism, when everyone of us was in danger of being starved and held in slavery to Germany. There are amongst us a few of Nature's freaks who are without the instinct of Patriotism, as there are other freaks without the religious instinct, and as there are women freaks without the

maternal instinct. But these are rare exceptions, and Nature herself disowns and dismisses them.

There are very few men living who are destitute of the instincts of Patriotism. Our Pacifists are superabundantly endowed with it. They burn with its purest ardours—for every country but their own. Behold them all through the war, scheming to bring about the victory of Germany, and the defeat of England. Behold them now scheming that justice shall not be done to Germany, and that England shall be baffled, and entangled, and condemned to pay the costs of Germany's crimes.

Pacifism and Internationalism are really perverted and diseased forms of the instinct of Patriotism. They are something akin to those not infrequent perversions of other primal instincts, which may be related to physical malformations, but which none the less we reprobate and punish. Congenital moral perverts are abominable enough; but the harm they work falls on a small circle, and chiefly upon themselves. But congenital political perverts are far more mischievous; for the harm they work falls on a large circle, and shakes the health and security of the whole social system.

How do we know that Internationalism is a perverted instinct? By its results. All the primal instincts, when they are normal, bring fruitful and beneficial results. When they are perverted, they bring evil results. Where and when has Internationalism brought anything but confusion, revolt, riot and anarchy? If Internationalism brings harmony and goodwill and prosperity to the peoples of the earth, if it leads them to any goal but general strife and chaos and bankruptcy, then the Lord hath not spoken by me.

I bring all these reasons and considerations before

you, sir, as Minister of Education, and as being largely responsible for the general drift and bias of political thought amongst the masses in the next generation. I suppose no man has more influence and power than yourself in directing future public opinion to wise issues. At an immeasurable cost of lives and treasure, and at terrible hazard of national disaster and ruin, we neglected, in the last generation, to train our boys in their first duty of being ready to defend their country. I grant it is not likely that an equal danger will threaten us in the future. It is scarcely likely that the same danger will threaten us. But having regard to the present unsettled condition of the world's affairs, who can tell what dangers and emergencies may arise during the next ten, or twenty, or forty years?

We insure our houses against fire, though in that minor matter we run not a hundredth part of the risk that we run in leaving ourselves uninsured, or half-insured, against any conflagration that may start amongst the inflamed peoples, and spread through our world-wide dominions. There are, I suppose, thousands of chances to one against a man's house being burnt down; yet every one of us insures against it. Are the chances so many as twenty to one that, in the course of a generation, a situation may not arise which it will be necessary for us to meet with a show of irresistible power, so that we may prevent another devastating and exhausting war? Why should we, as a nation, neglect to insure our property, when every private citizen, running not a hundredth part of the risk, does it as a matter of course?

It may be replied that we have just freed ourselves from all immediate danger, and that this is a very inopportune moment to raise such a question. On the

contrary, I affirm that this is the most opportune moment to decide upon our future policy in this matter. When a man has had two or three lucky reprieves from gaol and the gallows, is it not time for him to begin to ask himself whether, after all, there may not be some good, sound commonsense in the sixth and eighth commandments?

Twice, within twenty years, has the British Empire been saved from irrevocable ruin by the mercy of a toss-up. Twice has British civilization, all that a powerful and beneficent England means for the peaceable and prosperous development of the world, all that she has accomplished for mankind, all that she might yet accomplish—twice, within a short twenty years, has all this been hazarded and mortgaged to defeat and destruction by our wilful blindness and folly, our resolute refusal to look at the plain facts of our national responsibilities and necessities. Twice, did I say? Will our statesmen and generals tell us how many times in the last four years, England has hung over the precipice of irretrievable disaster, in jeopardy lest a mere finger-push of chance should send her reeling into the abyss?

Is not this the very moment to decide upon a clear future national policy, to give ourselves good reasons for it, that we may pursue it steadfastly, consistently, and continuously? Is not this the first question that we should consider in our plans of “reconstruction,” seeing that it is fundamental, and underlies all other questions; seeing that all our other national activities—educational, economic, industrial, social, must be shaped and directed according as we decide to take the road to Patriotism or to Internationalism?

Again, sir, as in the earlier part of this letter, I urge you to leaven our whole system of Popular Education

with a sober, resolute Patriotism, and to give all our boys, as part of their "general" education, some preliminary training in the first duty of every citizen, the defence of his country.

Could any proposal be more unwelcome, more outrageous, more unpopular? Why, what is this but blatant militarism, undisguised Prussianism, unholy soldier-worship, rank treason to humanity?

No, sir, my proposal tends to our national peace and security and prosperity. Is it we who would uphold militarism—we who have freely offered our dearest ones to crush it; we who for long past, have never heard a knock at the door without a clutch at our heart strings, lest it tokened that the Dread Visitor had called at our home; we who, going out into the night to stay the fever of our thoughts, have never for months looked up at the moon and stars, without their lighting up our imagination with pictures of our dearest flesh, mangled, scattered, writhing in helpless agony and thirst under that same canopy, under those same beams that fell so gently upon us in the dreaming night landscape? Is it we who are enamoured of militarism? Is it we who would seek to perpetuate it?

No, sir, my proposal that you should give all our boys some elementary drill and training in the defence of their country, aims at quite another mark than the establishment of militarism. It is indeed a proposal for that reduction of armaments, which we all see to be so urgent and necessary.

Everyone, except the demented, will allow that in the unsettled condition of Europe, we shall be obliged to keep a standing army of small, or moderate, or considerable dimensions, according as future circumstances may advise us. Everyone will allow that this standing army

must be reduced to the smallest numbers compatible with the security of our Empire. Now what could give us such confidence to reduce that standing army to the very lowest limits of safety, as the knowledge that the instinct of Patriotism had been wisely encouraged in our masses, and that all our able males had received some rudimentary training, so that they might be easily prepared to take up arms in an emergency? What could offer us such security against panic and alarm; and against the tragic and ridiculous necessity of having to use the methods of enlistment of 1914, of having again to badger, bribe, bully, shame, coax, and kick our recruits into doing their duty by means of advertising dodges worthy of a second-rate circus?

What so much contributed to bring about this war as our enemy's notion that England could not be roused to fight? What would be more likely to ensure the long future peace of the world than the knowledge that the man-power, the energy and courage of the British Empire were alert and charged to spring into action the moment they were summoned? Is it a long world-peace that we want? Then this is the way to obtain it.

I will say but one hasty word about the physical and moral value of such training, of its reinforcement of the national health. What testimony to its efficacy could be more convincing than that of the daily proofs under our eyes, and of the evidence given by the United States recruiting officers as to the marvelous instant restoration to health of the American city-bred populations that were brought under its cleansing and invigorating discipline?

Again, if such physical training as I am advocating were given to our boys of fourteen and fifteen, it need not take up much, or any of the time that should be

rightly claimed by books and study. All healthy boys of that age need much vigorous muscular exercise, and it would be an economical expenditure of their time if they took that exercise in the form of drill and scouting, and other out-of-door rudimentary military excursions. To most of them, these would soon become pleasant and exhilarating occupations.

And further, it is possible, and indeed likely, that if these boys are not given this elementary military training in their school days, a great many of them will be called to undergo it in their later years, when it will be more irksome, will interfere to a large extent with their ordinary employment, and will be more expensive to the State. Surely, the most of them can more easily and economically spare an hour or two each day in their school years, than in their early manhood, when their best time and energy should be given to their daily tasks and vocations.

And yet once more, it is better that they should receive this training at school, than later in barracks, at an age when barrack life has necessarily some objectionable features and associations.

As a measure of prudent national insurance, such as no citizen dare neglect in his private concerns; as a measure that makes for a higher standard of health in our cities; as a measure that offers the easiest, surest, cheapest means of reducing our armaments to their lowest limit of safety; as a measure that tends to the security of the British Empire, and therefore tends towards the permanent peace of the world—for all these reasons, I urge you, sir, to give full play and fostering to the instinct of Patriotism in all our schools, and to make elementary military training a part of every boy's education.

I urge this, without the least hope that you will adopt, or even consider, my proposal ; indeed, in the full knowledge that you will reject it; that so far as you do consider it, you will find it inconvenient and contrary to all your educational views and plans. It is dead against all the fashions and notions of the day in Popular Education. It is dead against the rising tide of political opinion. I know that, well enough. I turn to the latest estimate of our National Debt. I ask myself how much of all this monstrous expenditure might have been spared if my proposal had been put into operation in the years of 1890-1900. I catch a malign smile on the face of the little cherub who sits up aloft to keep watch over human delusions and fallacies. I give him a friendly shrug.

CHAPTER VI

(Nov.—Dec. 1918—Jan. 1919)

RENEWED EXAMINATION OF POPULAR EDUCATION, AND ITS EFFECTS

Daring suggestion to educate our carpenters to make tables and chairs—Non-readers and non-regarders—The Hebrew Scriptures—Useful maxims from them for national guidance—These ancient rules of conduct!—Appeal to great permanent rules and principles—Have we got hold of sure rules and principles in Popular Education?—Look at the facts—Double your Education rates! Treble them! Ignorance is the foe—The two most costly and mischievous kinds of ignorance—Proposal to levy supplementary Education rate for study of the great commandments—A matter for the parsons—England without a living credible religion—Manual labourers in angry revolt against their daily work—Professor Wallace on mistaken Education of Manual labourers—Forbidden to learn the things they will be mainly concerned to *do*—The young blacksmith who was educated to play the flute—Educational experts and Jane Austen's vicar—How nature establishes a sound and vigorous race—Our care of child life—We shall have to call in the biologist—Breeding the unfit—More important to get ourselves rightly born than rightly educated—Summons to the biologist for guidance towards wise legislation—Better to *fit* manual labour to its job than to *force* it to its job—Popular Education responsible for widely spread vulgarity and shoddiness—Our Popular songs—The ornament of our common life—Our whole system of Popular Education needs to be built on a new basis—Questions we now ask ourselves in educating our masses—Questions we should ask ourselves—Broad division line between manual labour and brain labour—Necessary to estimate the amount of each, and educate our masses accordingly—Coal and iron district peopled exclusively by artists, scholars, and thinkers—The gas workers of Odessa—School teachers and rag pickers—Their rates of pay compared—An unsound social structure—Superficial universal mis-education the cause of universal revolt—Nature has already sorted out our scholars for

us—Let us educate them discriminately—A million houses needed for working classes—Why not educate our children towards building them—Rate of wages quite unimportant—Social instability again traced to absence of living credible religion and active working faith—Motto for a new Education Act—Nature about to bring in a stringent Uneducation Bill of her own.

MANY months have passed, sir, since I sat down with the intention of writing you a short letter to point out what seemed to me the eccentric methods of your system of Popular Education—such, for instance, as the device for making good future cooks by inviting girls of fourteen to tell you what they know about Cicero and Miss Marie Corelli; and again, your scheme for providing sound household furniture for working class homes by carefully instructing our future carpenters in abstract matters of “general” education till they are eighteen.

In my ignorance of the mysterious laws of cause and effect, I will not dare to affirm, against your better judgment, that these are not the best methods of getting good cookery and good household furniture. I do know that relishing palatable food for our indoor workers is one of the first necessities of our national life, and I do know that they are in no likely way of getting it, unless kindly ravens bring it to them, or unless they are taught to earn it and cook it for themselves. That sound household carpentry is a great convenience of life, I have had constant reminders during the writing of this letter. And if you discover any lapses and flaws in the arguments I have brought before you, I hope, sir, you will generously ascribe them, not so much to my natural stupidity, as to my difficulty in collecting my thoughts while the door in the next room was dallying with its latch, and fitfully squeaking and moaning.

I suppose, sir, it would scarcely fall in with your system of "general" education, to allow some of us who may be inclined, to pay an additional education rate for the purpose of training some of our quite young urchins to be sound, skilled, general carpenters; meantime not neglecting to give them also such other education as would be surely useful to them and to the State. I suggest this simply as an experiment. It is true that it is an experiment of the kind that throughout all the past history of mankind has been successful. In the case of my old carpenter, it was the means of bringing him competence, and content with his daily work, and, I believe, some pleasure and pride in doing it. It was also the means of providing good household carpentry for his fellow workers.

However, we live in "a world of modern ideas," where facts are governed and regulated by our opinions, and where the past experience of mankind can offer us no guidance. We must make experiments amongst this new set of natural laws which we have ordained for the governance of the planet.

Having regard, then, to the woeful condition of the carpentry in our working-class homes, may I respectfully offer for your consideration, sir, the project I have outlined above; namely, that of training some hundreds or thousands of our boys who have a native aptitude and liking for carpentry, in the early practice of that fine and useful art. And I suggest, sir, that you should begin this training at about the age of ten or eleven, that is to say, at the age when their hands are most pliable, and their minds most plastic and receptive of training. Of course the experiment can be easily dropped, the moment it is proved that the present system of training boys up to the age of eighteen in

matters of abstract thought, provides a larger number and a better quality of tables and chairs.

I am aware that I cannot expect my suggestion will receive the least attention from you. Indeed, throughout my letter, I have written in the conviction that you will certainly be amongst my non-regarders, and probably amongst my non-readers.

Now the non-regarder is practically the equivalent of the non-reader, and in this sense most of our popular books may be said to be without readers. Most of our popular plays also are seen by non-regarders; and in this sense, are nightly acted for hundreds of nights to absent audiences. It is true that a vast number of people pay their money, and attend at the theatres, and clap their hands. And in the other case, a vast number of people buy the book, and turn over its pages, and look at its printed matter. Beyond this, nothing happens, except that incidentally much valuable time is wasted, and a great quantity of valuable paper is destroyed. I fear, sir, this serious "economic injury" must be placed to the debit of Popular Education; but doubtless it will be redressed, as you promise us, by giving our masses increased doses of that same "general education" which seems to have caused it.

Be this as it may, an author may certainly take more pride in having a large number of non-readers, than in having a large number of readers who are non-regarders. For clearly it is more respectful to an author not to read him at all, than to read him and not to give heed to what he says. If you should read this book, sir, and not regard it, I shall feel that I have wasted some hours of your time; while I shall also have an uneasy sense that I have lost an unanswerable case by my unfortunate manner of stating it. I will therefore flatter myself by

counting you among my non-readers, whom already I number by hundreds of millions, and who may be trusted to increase beyond fabulous computation as the ages roll on.

But even Shakespeare and Sir Hall Caine do not command an unlimited circulation, and there are some people who do not read the Bible. These are, of all men, the most to be pitied. For that bundle of strange old Hebrew books, for all their grotesque, misleading theology, their frequent contradictions, their childish science, their doubtful history, their monstrous fables and miracles, their occasional passages of shocking immorality—for all these faults and errors, these strange old Hebrew books do yet show us the way of life, if we will but plant our feet discerningly upon their precepts. Their rules of conduct make the beaten highway of mankind.

Here is one simple maxim that stirs my memory: "Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee." Consider the universal potency and effect of it. Suppose that short simple precept to have been framed and hung in the German Foreign and War Offices a dozen years ago—and obeyed. Germany to-day would be a great, rich, prosperous nation, commanding the respect and honour and friendship of the world. Just that short simple precept of twelve words!

Invert it, and it has the same universal potency and effect. "Dwell not securely by thy neighbour, when he deviseth evil against thee." Suppose that short simple precept to have been framed and hung in our own Foreign and War Offices a dozen years ago—and obeyed. We should have been spared by far the greater part of the miseries and losses of the past four years,

and our future naval supremacy would not now be jeopardized. Just that short, simple precept!

What magic "reconstructive" power have these old precepts over the character and circumstances of the men and the nations who obey them! The dozens of them that we daily disobey and neglect! Yet they are our sure guides to individual, social, and national well-being and happiness. Only in the measure that we keep them, will our schemes of "reconstruction" prosper, or be anything but whirling eddies of dust and wind and confusion.

"A false balance is abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight." A housewife in a London suburb tells me that there is not a neighbouring tradesman with whom she deals, who does not try daily cheats of pence and ounces. Petty enough, but what a patch of rottenness does it show in the texture of our everyday national life! What a comment on our system of Popular Education that concerns itself about Miss Marie Corelli, and apparently neglects the book of Proverbs!

"In all labour there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth to penury"—a verse that came forcibly to my mind a few nights ago, when I heard a dirty, shabby, disreputable, unshaven lounge announce to half-a-dozen of his like, "We're going to have Education! And we're going to have Our Rights!"—with a vicious emphasis on the last two words that boded ill to anybody else on the planet who may happen to have Rights.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is a maxim of sovereign universal value, as none of us will dispute. It seems, however, to offer to educational experts large opportunities for misapplication.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish, but he that keepeth the law, happy is he"—one might quote the whole book, so full it is of saving wisdom and national instruction.

These ancient rules of conduct! How oddly they sound in a "world of modern ideas"! These changeless precepts, that were old and serviceable to mankind when Abraham lived in tents on the plain of Mamre, and will be new and serviceable to mankind when that plain of Mamre shall be alive with airmen's wings!

These old, old rules of life! I know not in what adverse circumstances I may find myself in a year's time. I do know that I cannot be in any situation, however perplexed, where obedience to one or two of these rules will not bring me off with self-respect, and with credit among my fellows. I know not in what emergencies and dangers my country may find itself in the course of the coming generations. I do know that whatever changes and revolutions may shake and scatter the peoples, it will be only by a schooled and united Patriotism that England shall be safely brought through, and shall find her lasting security and prosperity only by the submission of all classes to those great fixed principles of orderly government which alone preserve nations from anarchy, dispersion, and ruin.

Return, O England, to the commandments that from of old have made nations great, and to the precepts that have made men wise! Lay fast hold upon them! Write them on the table of thy heart! Tie them about thy neck! So shall thy land have peace, and thy barns shall be filled with plenty! So shall thy children inherit the fatness of the earth, and there shall be no complaining in thy streets!

Surely if ever this nation was called upon to shape its

policy by great proved rules and principles, and not by party cries and expediciencies, the tricks of the caucus, the whimsies of doctrinaires, the bellowings of demagogues, and the clamours of the mob—surely it is called upon this day to choose this plain path of national safety.

Throughout this letter I have sought to build all my arguments upon great permanent underlying rules, upon principles that are proved and vouched for by facts, and are not at the mercy of shifting currents of popular opinion.

Would you say, sir, that, in this great matter of Popular Education, we have got hold of sure rules and principles?

Look at the facts. Here is a system that was designed to give free education to as many children as our working classes choose to bring into the world, no matter how diseased, how mentally and physically unfit they may be. It was designed to give every one of these children a chance of rising to any position for which his natural abilities may qualify him, and to fit all of them to earn their living in circumstances that should ensure them tolerable comfort and content. Yet after fifty years of it, we find the majority of working men in the kingdom in open rebellion against their lot, in open rebellion against the plainest economic laws. And the more education we give them, the louder and angrier grows their discontent.

Where is the fault? Is it in the human stuff that you are moulding? The soundest part of it has just shown that it can be trained to accomplish the most heroic deeds the world has ever seen—when it obeys its leaders, and does not command them, as in politics.

Is there not something wrong in the system by which

our working boys are trained for their civic duties, when the result is plainly seen to be a state of universal envy, discontent, and daily revolt against ordinary daily duties?

Who does not sympathize with our working men in their struggles for better conditions of life? Who would not willingly pay for giving them such Education as will tend to bring about these better conditions, so far as they are attainable in a world which certainly was not constructed on the easy plan of giving all its inhabitants a good time, and the right to breed at the expense of the State?

National money cannot be better spent than upon Education which does really educate, which does really draw out, not indeed all the natural abilities of every child, but chiefly and continuously those natural abilities by which each child will have to earn his living, and thus obtain reasonable comfort and content for himself, and be of most service to his fellow citizens and the State. Whatever advanced "general" education he wants, he will get for himself. If he will not do this, you do but multiply labour and expense and confusion by forcing it upon him. However, let advanced "general" education be easily within the reach of all who are desirous of it, and are likely to profit by it.

Double your Education rates, sir! Treble them, if you can but teach us the things it most concerns us to know, and yet more compulsively, the things it most concerns to *do*!

Ignorance is the foe. But what ignorance can be so mischievous and costly to the State, as ignorance of those plain precepts and rules of conduct which hold all human society together? And next, what ignorance can be so mischievous and costly to the State as ignorance

of our own particular work, ignorance of what our job is, and ignorance of the way to use our hands and tools when we have found our job. I think it would be safe to say that, after fifty years of Popular Education, these two kinds of Popular Ignorance are far more prevalent and widely spread in England to-day than they were before we had any National Education at all.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” That is the true foundation stone of all Popular Education. And tightly morticed to it are those old rules and precepts that I have glanced at—very granite wherewith to build up the character of our citizens, and the integrity of our public life.

While I have been writing this letter, I have got into talk with some of your younger scholars of the poorer classes, and have asked them questions about their teachers, and their lessons, and their school work. Perhaps I was unfortunate in the specimens of boyhood whom I happened to meet; perhaps their shyness tended to obscure and confuse their answers. I will not make any sweeping assertion, but I received a strong impression that amongst your *protégés* of the ages of ten to fourteen there is a general and alarming ignorance of the necessity for honesty and truthfulness. Doubtless this kind of ignorance is not confined to our street urchins, but is widely prevalent and chronic amongst all classes in all nations. But when we find that a considerable body of our tradesmen regularly conduct their business by a system of petty pilferings, it is permissible to suggest that classes should be held in all our national schools for the special study of the last six commandments and other obsolete rules of conduct, with demonstrations of their effect upon personal and

national character. If, sir, you should institute an inquiry into the prevalence of this kind of ignorance amongst your scholars, and its effect upon the community in the next generation, and if, as the result of the inquiry, you should levy a supplementary Education rate for the study and enforcement of these commandments, you shall find me your most cordial subscriber.

It may again be urged that this is a matter for the parsons. But surely it is unfair to put this important Educational work upon the shoulders of the parsons, overburdened as they already are with their gigantic task of reconciling their different systems of theology amongst themselves, and of making them credible to our intelligence. When they have accomplished this stupendous work, it will be time to ask for their help in rescuing the commandments from disuse and neglect. Meantime, it is clear that the working classes are largely rejecting both the theology, and the commandments. And England is left without a living credible religion. I often think that theology is the great enemy of religion, as the English theatre is the great enemy of the English drama.

Howbeit, sir, I will repeat that ignorance of these great commandments is one of the worst evils that can afflict a State, and that our system of Popular Education seems to be doing little to abolish it. What shall it avail, sir, though your scholars have passed all sorts of standards, and know a little about Cicero, and a great deal about Miss Corelli, if they have not been grounded in the knowledge and practice of the great permanent rules of life and conduct? Here is surely the first great business of Popular Education, the task that all its teachers should be set to pursue. I leave the matter to your careful consideration.

The second, and next most mischievous and costly kind of ignorance, is ignorance of our own particular work in the world. The dominant staring fact that meets both educational experts and politicians, is the fact that nearly every manual worker in the kingdom is in angry revolt against his daily job; does not merely take no pride in doing it well, but hates it, shirks it, performs it only by the stimulus of compulsion, or the lure of bribery; performs it, not as a duty and service to the community, but as a means of taxing the community, of whom the immense majority are his fellow workers.

If you will make a careful inquiry, sir, you will find that, not only in carpentry, but also in dozens of other trades and callings, where honest, skilled workmanship is necessary for the daily comfort of us all, there is the same slackness and incapacity, the same ignorance of the craft, the same hatred of the work itself. The motive thought that prompts our manual labourers to-day is not, "How can I do this job thoroughly and well, so that my fellow workers may benefit by my labour, while I shall equally benefit by their careful and honest work for me?" but, "How can I get through this job with the least trouble, and how can I get more pay for my next job?"

From this it follows that a great deal of the work that we are doing for others, and that others are doing for us, has to be done over and over again. Three pairs of bad boots have to be made at far greater cost of labour and time than one good pair. Three bad plays have to be written and produced at a greater cost of labour and time than one that demands serious thought from the author in writing it, and serious thought from the

audience in seeing it, and can therefore be seen many times with delight. And so the daily lives of most of us are pushing and worried and empty and mean, and are stripped of ornament and grace and thoughtful leisure. My friend Emery Walker tells me that a picture map of the road from Hyde Park Corner to Hammersmith in the early nineteenth century, shows that there was not a single house that was not beautiful, or pleasing to look at. Consider how thoroughly those builders and carpenters must have been educated in the things that it most concerned them to *do* and *make*.

Sir, the very plain meaning of this general rebellion of manual labour is that the great body of our workers are being educated *away* from their individual life-work, instead of being educated *towards* it. The result is that the majority of them find it repulsive and unbearable, shirk it, scamp it, and do it grudgingly, with ever louder grumblings and threats. Surely this points to some serious defect in the system of education that prepares them for it. How else do you account for the fact, that with higher wages and easier material conditions of living than have ever been known, the great body of manual labour throughout the kingdom is in constant and increasing rebellion?

If Popular Education does not prepare our labouring classes for existence in an actual world where there is a tremendous amount of hard, dirty, disagreeable work to be done by somebody, and where none of them can have any comfort and content until that hard, dirty, disagreeable work is done, what impossible fairy land is Popular Education preparing our working classes to live in?

My general argument receives powerful confirmation

from one who speaks from long practical experience of the working of our educational machine. In his "Open Letter to Mr. Lloyd George,"¹ Professor Robert Wallace of Edinburgh University brought the most urgent and cogent reasons for the postponement and reconsideration of the English and Scotch Education Bills, then before Parliament. He clearly showed how mischievous their operation is likely to be in many ways. In a second pamphlet,² containing his "Opening Lecture" this season, Professor Wallace brings further convincing evidence of the economic fallacy, the wasteful futility and the general impracticability of many of the clauses of these misconceived measures. He advises that some approach be made in our education of manual workers to the old Scottish system, which not only trained and developed a sturdy, industrious, educated working and peasant class, but also gave us many able administrators and leading men in all the professions, thus conspicuously helping to build up the Empire. If National Education is to be judged by results, surely that old Scotch system offers us many features that might be most usefully and beneficially copied and embodied in our educational legislation.

Professor Wallace arrives at the conclusion that the education of manual labour throughout the country is being mainly conducted on vicious first principles, and towards consequences that will be increasingly disadvantageous and disastrous, alike to the working classes themselves and to the State. I have not the practical experience of Professor Wallace, and can only judge by

¹ "Open Letter to Mr. Lloyd George" (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh), 2d.

² "Opening Lecture," by Robert Wallace (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh), 6d.

results. Sir, our workers are being largely educated away from realities, and ignorance itself is better than such an education.

Professor Wallace's unanswerable letter to Mr. Lloyd George was disregarded by the Prime Minister himself, and by the late Parliament. Will the new Parliament set itself to search thoroughly into this most pressing matter of "reconstruction"? Doubtless it will contain an increasing number of members who will try a tussle and a juggle with eternal economic laws, like men who should construct a barometer to regulate the weather, and give us as much sunshine as we would like.

Meantime, sir, there are those million or thereabouts of houses to be built, and an infinite amount of other hard manual labour to be done for the working classes. Again, in my ignorance of the mysterious laws of cause and effect, I will not dare to affirm against your better judgment, that the execution of all this accumulating manual work may not be furthered by your simple expedient of keeping all our vigorous young labourers in continuation classes till they are eighteen, there to be employed in learning things that most of them do not wish to know, that many of them cannot comprehend, and that would be useless to the majority if they could comprehend them. And this at a time when nearly every working man in the kingdom is dissatisfied with his lot, and is likely to be in constant insurrection, striking for higher wages and shorter hours!

With this prospect before us, you will permit me, sir, to watch the working of your experiment with a legitimate curiosity, and an earnest hope that for the sake of the working classes themselves it may prove successful; at the same time holding myself in readiness

to tender you at any moment the sympathy which Jove feels with a good man struggling with adversity.

Do I grudge our working classes any good, or comfort, or knowledge, or luxury that it may be possible for them to obtain, and to keep in their possession, and bequeath to their children? These workers of England! What kindness, what loveliness, what native humour and shrewd good sense, what generosity, patience, and stubborn endurance, are to be found amongst them! There is not one of them who can wish any real and lasting good for himself that I do not wish for him, and would not help him to attain—so far as it is attainable, and is aidant to the general security and civilization of the State. Surely the working classes of this country are as capable of great accomplishments and constructive work in peace, as they have shown themselves capable of great accomplishments and exalted heroism in war. If only they will find the right leaders, and if only they will suffer themselves to be led!

It is estimated that 85 per cent.¹ of the children under your jurisdiction, sir, belong to the class of manual workers, or of those who will have to earn their living by routine or mechanical operations where the hand is employed rather than the brain. With this 85 per cent. in our minds, I beg most respectfully, sir, to offer for your consideration this general maxim, as a first principle that should inform our entire system of Popular Education—"Future manual workers shall, so far as possible, be allowed and encouraged to learn those things that they will be mainly concerned to *do*, and shall not be forced to learn those things that they will be only remotely concerned to *know*." Our present system of Popular Education is based upon the opposite principle,

¹ Professor Wallace, "Open Letter to Mr. Lloyd George."

which declares: "Future manual workers shall be forbidden to learn those things that they will be mainly concerned to *do*, and shall be forced to learn those things that they will be only remotely concerned to *know*."

That is the principle which has guided experts in education for the last generation, and your new Act asserts it with gathering force. Hence it is that almost universal discontent prevails amongst the working classes, and hence it is that much of the necessary ordinary mechanical work of our daily lives is shirked and scamped, and is being done with increasing friction, and at an increasing cost to the nation—that is, at an increasing cost to the working classes who form the bulk of the nation. What other results could we expect? What but larger results of the same sort can we expect in the future?

The whole matter is governed by the well-known physiological law, which may be summarized thus: "All exercises of our muscles and nerves tend to become less irksome, more agreeable, and more effectual, the earlier they are learned, and the longer they are practised."

When we remember that 85 per cent. or thereabouts of our population will have to earn their living, and to contribute to the prosperity of the State by the exercise of certain muscles trained in various ways, it seems a strange system of education that forbids them to exercise these muscles, and forces them all to an unwelcome irritation of irrelevant brain centres. The young blacksmith who was prepared for his profession by means of lessons on the flute up to the age of eighteen, never mastered his craft, and was always dissatisfied with it. Nor did he become so much as a passable musician, though he had grown to believe that this was his true vocation. The horses in that neighbourhood were very

badly shod, and he was constantly kicked about the forge. One day he was permanently disabled by the hoof of a recalcitrant animal, who did not like his amateur method of shoeing, and whom he had vainly tried to soothe by a solo on the flute. He spent the remainder of his days giving lectures on the faulty structure of society in the taproom of the "Blue Lion."

I have sometimes wondered whether experts in education have ever noticed how exquisite an instrument is the human hand, how quickly it responds to instruction, how infinitely more worthy of trust it is than the human brain, how far more certain of success in its operations. Now 85 per cent. of our population have, willy-nilly, to earn their livings by their hands, in tasks that scarcely make any demand upon the brains. Surely, the first question we have to ask ourselves is this: "How can these tasks be made the least irksome, the most tolerable, the most agreeable to the workers, so that they may have the greatest comfort and content, and perform them with goodwill and to the best of their ability, to the end that the whole community, of whom 85 per cent. are the workers themselves, shall receive the greatest benefit?"

Bearing in mind the physiological law that governs the whole matter, that all bodily activities become more agreeable by repetition, that all conditions of life become more bearable the longer we are used to them, we may vary the question, and put it thus: "How shall we educate 85 per cent. of our boys and girls, so that in after life the exercise of their muscles and hands in their daily duties shall not be grievous to them, or appear degrading; so that such work as carpentry shall give them satisfaction and pleasure; so that even such work as mining and iron puddling shall, by habit and confirmation, become acceptable or at least endurable, and

shall not provoke them to incessant discontent and rebellion?"

That, sir, is the first and chief problem of Popular Education. Just that, and not: "How can we force the greatest number of these boys and girls to pass certain standards of secondary education, despite their faculties and their inclinations, despite the obvious fact that most of them have inherited more muscle than brains, despite the fact that most of the knowledge so pumped into them will filter out in a month, and that what is retained will be very doubtfully and indirectly of any use to them?"

This last is the question which educational experts are now busily asking themselves. Being concerned with Education rather than with Life, they have come to think that Life is a preparation for Education instead of seeing that Education is a preparation for Life. They are like Jane Austen's vicar, who, being fond of gruel himself, and finding it agreeable to his digestion, supposed it to be equally agreeable and nourishing to everybody else, and set down all his hungry guests to a meal of slops.

It is primarily a question of getting us all into a habit of proficiency and reasonable content in our individual work and duty, not of getting us all to pass standards in certain accomplishments, though this may be desirable when once our first object is achieved. Would you say, sir, that the majority of the scholars who have passed through our national schools, have been trained into a habit of proficiency and reasonable content in their individual work and duty, when the whole industrial world is constantly in a state of sulky discontent, or of obstructive revolt? Would you say, sir, that the "economic injury" done to the country from this cause, does

not far outweigh whatever economic benefit may result from indiscriminately forcing advanced "general" education upon everybody?

What habit can be more wholesome, more fruitful with good results to the community, and therefore more necessary to be taught, than the habit of getting our own living—and this as early as possible, provided only that our health does not suffer too severely?

This is a vexed and difficult question. It is not to be solved by a blind benevolence that hastens to endow and multiply weakness and misery and disease, heedless of all the reactions it sets up in the average health and strength of the community. In this sharpest battle and scurry of life whereto we are all conscripted, it must needs be that many of us shall be maimed, and that some of us shall fall. It must needs be that the health of many of us shall suffer, and that the lives of some of us shall be shortened and sacrificed by reason of the daily labour that falls to our lot. For this is the way that Nature takes to establish a sound and vigorous race.

It happened some years ago, that in June I was in the South of France, in July I was in Brittany, in August I was in the Isle of Arran. On the slopes of the Maritime Alps, the sun makes the conditions of life easy, and does most of the labour in the gardens and vineyards and olive orchards. Yet the peasants generally were decrepit and degraded; many of them were broken with toil and old at thirty. In Brittany, where the climate is harsher and more bracing, the appearance and bearing of the peasantry plainly declared a higher average of health; there was a good show of robust manhood amongst a general population containing many middling and sickly ones. But in the Isle of Arran, where the sun gives small encouragement to laziness,

where for generations the stern climate has flogged the peasants to constant exertion to gain their daily bread, where each remorseless winter has hurried the phthisicky and weakly ones to the churchyard, and stayed them from breeding their like—under these stern conditions, I saw not one man, woman, or child, who did not carry a certificate of vigorous health in his face.

Clearly we are not living in a world where every child's physical constitution and mental capacity can be developed to the utmost. Let us indeed cherish our child-life as our most valuable and dearest national asset, but let us not cherish it so unwisely as to breed an increasing proportion of children who will be unable to meet the actual conditions and inevitable hardships of life. Let us beware of reactions. If there is some soul of goodness in things evil, so also there is some soul of evil in things that are good in themselves—even in our care of child-life. And we may be sure that Nature, with her thoughtful, kindly cruelty, will distil it out.

The doctors are doubtless looking into this matter, and can give us much good advice. But the doctors are chiefly concerned to show us how to save the weak, rather than how to breed the strong. We shall have to call in the biologist.

In my ignorance and presumption, I have already offered you so much unpalatable advice, sir, that I pause before I overween myself still further. Yet I will dare to say that the biologist stands behind you and over you in this matter of Popular Education, as he stands behind and over so many of our social reformers and politicians, who never suspect his presence. If 85 per cent. of our population have to get their living by manual labour, it is clearly necessary that we should, first of

festering rebellion, not against remedial ills, but against plain economic laws, against the fundamental conditions of human life. Instruct us how we can shape our legislation so that, while not one waif or broken bit of humanity is left uncared for, we may yet discourage and forbid the multiplication of those whom Nature would reject and cast into outer darkness. Show us how we may be found helping her in her merciful work of repression, instead of zealously hindering her and defying her.

Assuming that the biologist will relieve us of any great anxiety as to the general physique of the nation, we might further ask him to tell us whether we are breeding muscles and brains in something approaching those proportions which the necessary manual and intellectual work of the country respectively demand. For there must be distress and insurrection if there is any great disparity and incompatibility between the amount and quality of the various kinds of labour to be performed, and the respective numbers and right proportions of the labourers who are physically or mentally capable of performing it. Here again we may hope that the biologist will tell us that we are reasonably well supplied with raw human material in the right proportions.

This granted, it is necessary that this vast bulk of human material should be sorted out, and each division of it rightly trained and educated to its own work. And as the social machine will not work unless some 85 per cent. of this human material is employed in manual labour, it is surely wiser to *fit* it to its job, than to *force* it to its job, so that the work may be done without putting too great a strain on the labourer; without injuring his self-respect and doing violence to his feelings; so that when he is building a house, he may not feel that

he ought to be riding in his motor-car to his city office, with a fur rug over his knees, and a choice Havana between his lips. Doubtless he is more worthy to ride in his motor-car, and smoke choice Havanas than many men who are doing these things. Who is most worthy to ride in motor cars and smoke choice Havanas, is a terribly vexatious problem which seems to defy solution. While we are trying to solve it to the satisfaction of everybody, the house does not get built, nor does any work get done. And then the working classes are the chief sufferers. I remember reading in the American papers, an address delivered by Mr. Carnegie to the boys of the United States. He advised them all to follow his example, and they might all become eminent millionaires.

Suppose, sir, that while 85 per cent. of our population will necessarily have to get their daily bread by manual labour, you are educating 85 per cent. or some large proportion of them, in such a way that instead of preparing themselves for manual labour, their chief hope is to dodge it, and to get their living in some "genteel" occupation in the ranks above it. Then clearly much of the manual work of the country will be badly done; a vast number of badly trained, disappointed persons will be doing it in a half-hearted, discontented way; and a great number of other badly-trained, disappointed persons will be found in those numerous quasi-genteel occupations which make little demand upon the muscles, and less upon the brains, and many of which are parasitic, or useless to the community.

Perhaps you may have noticed, sir, that one of the results, or, at least, one of the accompaniments of Popular Education, is the growth of a large class, just above the actual labouring class, who have assimilated just enough

"general education" to make hard working obnoxious to them, and who are mentally incapable of being educated so as to compete successfully for any worthy or dignified intellectual employment. Hence a certain vulgarity and shoddiness and vicious taste has spread throughout the ranks of this class, and downwards into large sections of the neighbouring labour classes, and upwards into large sections of the neighbouring middle classes. Hence the number of useless and hideous things that are ticketed in the shop windows, "Artistic! Six pence three farthings."

As I have said, we get a true measure of the value and tendency of Popular Education in our popular theatres. We also get it in our popular music. Our most popular songs are mainly models of bad taste in language, mated to coarse, empty jingle. They please our popularly educated public, drive true lovers of music crazy for a few months, and are then forgotten. They are, perhaps, not much worse than many of the forgotten popular songs of past generations. But they are certainly more empty and meaningless and vulgar. What it concerns us to note is that, with the increasing spread of Popular Education, we have almost lost the art of writing an English song that the common people can delight to sing, and that will not distress our true musicians. We cannot put simple, sincere words conveying true feeling, to simple, sincere music conveying true feeling. Surely this implies that something is wrong with the general education of our people. For in all ages and communities, music has been the chief delight and recreation and solace of the common folk. The popular songs of a people are windows into the minds and hearts of that people. They are the surest indicators and revealers of its intellectual and spiritual

condition. Judge then, sir, what is the intellectual and spiritual condition of the millions whom you are educating, by their most popular songs. Would you think me impertinent if I were to send you a bundle of them?

Again we have to note that this vulgarity and vicious taste so prevalent in our popular music, as in our general life, has spread downwards and upwards, and has infected all classes. We do not seem to be educating our great public; our great public seems to be educating its teachers. There is, however, a large body of our labouring classes who are as yet free from this vulgarity and vicious taste. They are those who have been the least under the influence of Popular Education. A labourer who is doing hard, useful work, may be dirty, ignorant, and brutal; but he is not vulgar. Vulgarity has to be learnt; it has to be inculcated before it can be practised.

After instilling the great commandments, the first main object of Popular Education is to train our masses so that they may do their individual daily work thoroughly, and with reasonable content. The second main object of Popular Education is to train our masses to ornament their lives with simplicity, grace and unpretentious beauty. Would you say, sir, that Popular Education is in a fair way to attain either of these two main objects? Are not the majority of our labourers doing their work badly and half-heartedly? Are they not in a state of constant and growing revolt against it? Is not the ornament of our common life for the most part trumpery, false, debased, vicious, whether we take the test of music, songs, plays, popular literature, or household furniture and decoration? And are not these evils traceable to the fact that Popular Education is,

to a growing extent, teaching our masses the things that they are not greatly concerned to *know*, and is not teaching them the things that they are most concerned to *do*? And the very plain, though indirect and unintentional, effect of this teaching is that manual labour is brought into discredit, and becomes abhorrent to the bulk of those who will have to earn their living by it; while the correlative effect is that we are fostering the growth of a large class of miseducated sixpenny-three-farthing vulgarians, who will not get their living by their hands, and cannot usefully and worthily get it by their brains.

Many of these have been most helpful during the war, and, by the temptation of high wages, have done well in those numerous temporary occupations where no special skill was required. But will there not be great discontent and distress amongst them when we settle down to peace?

I have cordially allowed that one or two of the clauses in your new Education Act will afford opportunities for teaching some of the household arts and crafts; and doubtless good use will be made of these opportunities. But if we are to remedy the evils I have dwelt upon or avoid their increase, does not our whole system of Popular Education need to be built on a new basis?

We now start by asking ourselves:

"How can we keep our boys and girls from performing any profitable manual labour in their earlier years?"

"How can we render their childhood useless to the community?"

"How can we force upon them all the largest amount of 'general' education, in the hope that some of it may, at some time, be useful to some of them?"

"How can we keep all of them at school as long as possible, thus preventing them from giving their best

energies to their daily work in those impressionable years when they most need to be confirmed in steady habits of daily toil, and thus defrauding the community of a great deal of valuable and necessary labour that, being performed, would benefit the working classes chiefly, and would tend to bring them additional comfort and content?"

These are the questions we now ask ourselves in educating our masses. Ought we not rather to ask ourselves:

"How can we educate these boys and girls so that the manual labour by which most of them will have to get their living, will in after years be agreeable to them, or in the more exhausting occupations, will be as little oppressive and intolerable as the nature of the work permits?"

"Seeing that all experience teaches that those things are done best and most easily throughout life, which are most thoroughly learned in our earliest years, how can we, without injury to their health, give as many as possible of these boys and girls some early training in their probable future callings, and allow them to practise these callings with profit to themselves and the community, at as early an age as possible?"

"In the case of those very numerous occupations for which no preparation can be given at school, and which will employ the vast majority of our scholars, how can we avoid the error of educating our future workers *away* from their future work, away from realities, towards other ends and aims, and in such a manner as will make them envious, sulky, discontented, and dilatory in their work, to the serious 'economic injury' of the country, especially of the working classes?"

"How can we give to the bulk and average of these

boys and girls sufficient 'general education' to meet the ordinary demands of daily life, without forcing upon all of them miscellaneous information and smatterings of accomplishments, which tend to mental sloppiness, to the spread of crude, bad tastes, and to the wide diffusion of spurious sixpenny-three-farthing culture?"

"How can we give the greatest encouragement to any of these boys and girls who show more than average ability, or who possess some special gift or talent? How can we throw open the gates of opportunity as widely to them as to the richest and highest in the land, so that their gift or ability may not be crushed and lost, but may have the freest course to declare and develop itself, and fructify to the general good? How can we give to all of these such a suitable and special education, as will help them to rise to any high position for which they may be naturally fitted?"

"Seeing that universal, indiscriminate, 'general' education seems to lead to the general debasement of the public taste, to the extinction of originality and the suppression of genius, to the vulgarization of our amusements, to the diffusion of sixpenny-three-farthing culture, and the multiplication of sixpenny-three-farthing objects of art, how can we educate, or uneducate, or refrain from educating our masses, so that whatever natural sense of beauty they have, may not be deadened and perverted, and their leisure desecrated by senseless delights, but so that all the ornamentation of common lives and homes may be wise and thoughtful and exhilarating and spread its charm over our whole national life?"

"In the insecurities of the present, and the uncertainties of the future, in view of our great responsibilities all the world over, how can we give all our growing

boys some preliminary training in the defence of our Empire, as a duty that they may be called upon to fulfil, and that should be equally shared by all classes? How can we make this training a pleasurable exercise, a physical and moral discipline to the boys, while making it also the foundation of our scheme of national defence, and a means of reducing our actual standing army to the lowest national requirements?"

These questions appear to indicate the general aims and scope of a system of Popular Education best fitted to the present needs of our nation, best fitted to develop the physical and mental capacities of the entire population to the greatest advantage of all, and therefore most likely to bring the greatest general comfort, prosperity, and content. Such a system of Popular Education would begin by recognizing the plain fact that there is a vast amount of manual labour to be done, and that this manual labour must necessarily occupy the chief hours and the best energies of the great majority of our population.

Therefore, our first care should be to see that a sufficient majority is not educated to escape from manual labour, but so far as is possible, is educated to perform it, and this in the prime and very obvious interest of the working classes themselves.

Thus, in spite of the private opinions and wishes of any of us, a broad division line is by necessity fixed between those children who will have to get their living by the labour of their hands and muscles, and those who will have to get their living by the exercise of their brains. This line is very loose and ill-defined, and can be easily passed, but it is sufficiently distinct to separate the great body of our scholars into two main classes; and to mark them out for separate educational treat-

ment, as soon as they have been thoroughly taught the great commandments, and have been given a quite elementary training suitable to them all.

Within these two main divisions of the work necessary to be done, there are several sub-divisions. There is scarcely any manual labour that does not call for some exercise of the brain; there are many intellectual occupations that call for considerable dexterity of the hands. But, very roughly, the two main divisions of labour remain permanently distinct, and, after a certain age, call for quite separate educational treatment for the two classes of scholars. In a much less degree, the various subdivisions of labour within each of the main classes, call for differential education for the scholars who will have to get their living by occupations that demand differing aptitudes and differing physical or mental capacities.

We will now turn from the work to be done to the boys and girls who will have to earn their living by doing it.

We will assume that the biologist has satisfied us that the root and stock of the nation is sound, that it is not deteriorating in comparison with competing nations, and that the natural physical and mental capacities of our millions of boys and girls vary in the right proportions, that is, in some rough approximation and adaptability to the varied kinds and amounts of labour they will be called upon to perform.

This adaptability of the quantity and quality of muscles and brains respectively to the amount and kinds of manual and brain work to be done, is the first condition of any healthy and stable civilization. It is the keystone upon which rests the ultimate security of the State. A system of Popular Education which neglects

to train the best brains of the country to their best uses, stands obviously condemned. Much more deserving of much sterner condemnation, is a system of Popular Education which trains all the inferior brains of a country to uses for which they are naturally unfitted, and which neglects to train the hands and muscles of the country towards the work for which they are fitted, and which calls for performance before any effective brain work can be done at all. Surely such a system of Popular Education will prove to be more mischievous in the end, than a system of Popular Education which neglects to train its best brains to their best uses. For the best brains have an inveterate habit of educating themselves. They cannot help it, and indeed seem to be encouraged by difficulties, as ten thousands of instances prove.

Therefore, it should be a chief concern of the Ministry of Education, firstly to estimate the amount and kinds of manual labour that must necessarily be done, and to train a sufficient number of children towards doing it, or at least scrupulously to avoid training the majority of children *away* from doing it; and, secondly and conjunctively, to estimate the amount of brain work that it is necessary or desirable to get done, and to train a sufficient number of children of the best mental capacities towards doing it. In this way we shall roughly ensure that the manual labour of the country will be mainly done by those who are physically best suited to do it, and also that the far more important brain work of the country will be mainly done by those who are mentally best suited to do it; we shall preserve a steady balance between the different classes of workers, and get an approximately right apportionment of the various kinds of labour. When this balance and apportionment

are upset, when eighty-five square physical pegs are struggling to force themselves into fifteen round mental holes, the State is tending towards insecurity, confusion, and anarchy—as every day more plainly shows us, if we will open our eyes to facts, and cease to fondle our whimsies.

Let us suppose a stretch of country where coal and iron abound, and which, by an artificial arrangement of society, has been peopled almost exclusively by a delicate refined race of artists, scholars, and thinkers, the vast majority of whom are physically unfitted for rough manual labour. We can readily see that in the course of time, Nature would remove such inhabitants, and would entirely change the breed of men in that district. Meanwhile, muscular labour, being very scarce, would be very highly paid, and would probably spend its money and leisure in coarse amusements suited to its tastes. The artists, and scholars, and thinkers, being largely superfluous, would be very badly paid; would be more and more impoverished and discontented, and would tend to become ineffective and degenerate. Their condition would be only made the worse by educating the manual labourers to be artists and scholars and thinkers; for, by the hypothesis, we have already too many of them for the natural resources of the country to support. Nor would the manual labourers themselves be much benefited by educating them all to be artists and scholars and thinkers; for it is their special function to supplant the superfluous artists and scholars and thinkers, and thus develop the natural resources of the country to the best advantage for the whole community. There would doubtless be many of the manual labourers who would like to be artists and scholars and thinkers, and who would be naturally fitted for such vocations; but so

far as they were indulged, the difficulties and inconveniences of the whole population would only be aggravated, and the economic disorder increased. The equilibrium of the situation would only be restored when a sufficient number of the artists and scholars and thinkers had been starved out, or when the greater part of them had, after much suffering and discontent, adapted themselves to manual labour.

I have put an extreme case where the great majority of the population were *born* with natural incapacities for the work that they were called upon to do. But for all practical purposes, it matters not whether men are *born* with incapacities, or whether they are *educated* into them. The result is the same; a certain number of workers are disabled, or partially disabled, and do not perform the labour that is necessary to be done for the community, or do it grudgingly and imperfectly. And thus the country suffers a great "economic injury," which I am afraid we must put to the debit of "general" education.

How can we tell whether any considerable number of our population are being educated *away* from the particular labour, or kind of labour that the general welfare of the State calls upon them to perform? Very clearly by the rates of pay which the various classes of labour receive for the work that they do.

I am wholly of opinion that hard, disagreeable skilled work should be very highly paid; indeed, I am of opinion that all useful work should be very highly paid. But unfortunately the rates of wages are not regulated by my opinion, or by the opinions of the workers themselves. The rates of wages are regulated by severe economic laws, which cannot be broken without calling forth reactions very disagreeable to the workers. As

soon as the Russian revolution was proclaimed, the gas workers of Odessa voted that their wages should be eighty pounds a month. The gas workers are now starving and rioting in misery with the rest of the population; Odessa is in darkness, perilously in need of some illumination in its streets and homes, more perilously in need of some illumination on the working of economic laws.

The comparative rates of pay in various occupations give us a very fair rough measure of how far the population of a country has, in its different classes and capacities, been wisely and suitably educated towards the performance of those labours and duties in which its members will be severally engaged, and by which they will have to earn their daily bread. Professor Wallace, at the end of his opening lecture¹ this season, gives some examples of the scale of wages received by certain classes of manual and brain workers.

I am sure you would agree, sir, that no kind of ordinary, everyday brain work is more honourable, important, and responsible than that of a School teacher; requiring, as it does, not only a rather high and varied education, but also good manners, good habits, good conduct, good taste, tact, patience, self-control, authority, sympathy, skill in handling children, and a personality that is not repellent to them. What occupation deserves more liberal pay, deserves something more than a living wage? What would you consider to be a suitable salary for a school teacher in a town like Arbroath, with its 22,700 inhabitants? The Arbroath School Board offer £80 a year to one who ought to possess all these accomplishments, if the training of your scholars in that town is not to suffer in some respects.

¹ Opening Lecture, p. 28 (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 6d).

Again, what manual work calls for less skill, or thought, or knowledge of any kind, calls for less care in habits, conduct, manners, dress, or character, than that of a scavenger—its one desirable, but not necessary qualification, being a diminished sensibility of the olfactory nerves. What would you consider, sir, to be a suitable salary for an Arbroath scavenger, comparing his work and responsibilities with the work and responsibilities of an Arbroath school teacher? The town pays its scavengers £101 18s. per annum, that is, over twenty-five per cent. more wages than it pays its school teachers.

What treasure houses of social and economic information are these advertisement columns of newspapers! Let us take another sample.

The Bath City Council and Education Committee require an assistant in the School of Commerce and Languages. This, again, is a post which seems to demand that its occupant shall possess rather high and varied qualifications and accomplishments. He is offered £90 a year. Meantime the "Daily Chronicle" offers £208 a year (£4 a week), with permanent employment and easy hours, to a ragpicker—a calling which, like scavenging, demands neither skill of hand or brain, nor any qualification of character or conduct.

How excellent a thing is Education! How far more excellent is plenty of good bread and cheese and beer!

Is it not, sir, a grave reproach to your department that a debased and servile employment like ragpicking, should be paid more than two and a half times as highly as school teaching? Doubtless, sir, you will consider it advisable to redress this grievance of your teachers, and to see they have no cause to envy the affluence of the happy ragpickers.

It is clearly impossible to reduce the pay of the ragpickers. They wouldn't like it; and they all have votes. We must raise the pay of the teachers. To what figure shall we raise it? If knowledge and educational attainments, good conduct and character, are not to be despised by our masses, and less esteemed than unintelligent ignorance and the meanest unskilled labour, we must raise our teachers' pay till at least it equals the pay of the ragpickers. You will not, I am sure, cast so great a slur upon educational accomplishments as to pay for them at a less rate than is paid for ragpicking. And a thousand pities it is that such dignified, important, and skilled brain work as school teaching, does not automatically command a far higher rate of wages than the commonest and vilest slopwork of the streets. How comes this about? We must inquire how it is that our market prices for ragpicking and school teaching are so disproportionately fixed.

Meantime, sir, very respect for the great cause of Education itself, urges you to raise the financial status of our teaching staff to the financial status of ragpickers. If you would leave them without just and crying reason for complaints and strikes, you can scarcely do less than this. That is, *you must artificially pay them two and a half times as much as they are worth in the labour market.*

Will not that be taking a step on a very dangerous road? For it seems that all other classes of manual and brain labourers are also demanding higher wages—demanding wages that are regulated, not by the operation of economic laws, but by their own estimate of what they are worth, or what they would like to get. And the same economic laws that, in the present relative abundance of superficial intellectual accomplish-

ments, and the present relative scarcity of willing manual labour—the same economic laws that have already fixed the pay of ragpickers at more than two and a half times the pay of school teachers, will continue to work towards the same result, and will tend to raise the pay of ragpickers till it reaches a modest competence of £500 per annum, while the teachers will be grumbling and languishing on a paltry £200.

We are daily receiving the plainest evidence that the price of one article, or of one kind of labour, cannot be inflated without causing an inflation in the prices of other articles and other kinds of labour. Thus we continue to blow our roseate bubbles till they burst.

When the gas workers of Odessa vote themselves eighty pounds a month wages, we plainly perceive that they are building an unsound social structure. And surely enough the social structure cracks, and falls in ruin in a few weeks. When, as in England to-day, we find that an occupation which calls for knowledge, intelligence, educational attainments, good conduct, and some refinement of manner, dress, and habits—when we find that such an occupation is paid considerably less than half what is paid for vagabond, ignorant, unskilled labour which can be performed by anyone without the least education, can we not perceive that we also are building an unsound social structure?

How comes it that ragpicking is so inordinately paid, and is in such a state of careless, easy affluence, compared with school teaching? Plainly because we have been producing and training school teachers and ragpickers in wrong proportions, having regard to the amounts and kinds of work necessary to be done. The wide diffusion of Popular Education has brought about a relative abundance of superficial intellectual accom-

plishments, and a relative scarcity of manual labour willing to perform the most ordinary everyday tasks.

A certain irreducible amount of manual labour must be performed for every one of us that comes into the world. We must all be fed, clothed, shod, housed, and provided with many other necessities of life, *before* we can be educated, or even be fit to receive education. Therefore I respectfully submit to you, sir, that these are the fundamental questions we have to ask: "How much, and what kinds of manual labour must necessarily be done for our forty millions of people? How can we first and best educate our masses to do this imperative manual work carefully and thoroughly, and so far as may be, willingly and without incessant disturbance of the State, and dislocation of social life?" When we have answered these questions, when we have laid out an Educational scheme that shall first take account of these first and urgent national necessities, and shall first provide for them, we can go on to ask, "How much general and advanced education can we give to all who are likely to profit by it, and to all who care to avail themselves of it?" And we can then be very liberal in giving "general" education, as indeed every one would wish to be.

For, all these considerations being duly weighed, and all these urgent national necessities being duly provided for, I will still cordially agree with you that "no country in the long run suffers an economic injury from an improvement in the general education of its population." A soundly educated Englishman is wanted all the world over; a half-educated Englishman is wanted in very few countries; a mis-educated Englishman is wanted nowhere—certainly not in England.

Again, we may remind ourselves that if this neces-

sary manual work is not done, or is done imperfectly, it is the workers themselves who are the chief sufferers. And they will assuredly suffer far more grievously if they are stinted in the necessities which manual labour provides for them, than if they are stinted in the items of information provided by "general" education. It is harder to go short of food than of a knowledge of Roman history; to nine out of ten of us, a sack of coal is worth more than a cartload of mathematics; and a pair of good stout boots on a working man's feet, are better than a hundred crudely conceived social problems in his head. We are about to receive some very rude enlightenment on the comparative value of all these commodities.

In view of the present alarming economic situation, would you say, sir, that the vast numbers of our population who must necessarily be employed in manual labour, are receiving in our schools, a sound and suitable training for their life's work? Would you not say that a large and increasing number of them are being educated *away* from it, in the hope of escaping from it, and in the certainty of being dissatisfied with it? How else do you account for the underpayment of school teachers and many other more or less skilled brain workers, in comparison with unskilled labourers? How else do you account for the abundance of useless, superficial, intellectual accomplishments, and the relative scarcity of willing manual labour? How else do you account for the tawdry shoddiness and staple ugliness of our urban life? How else do you account for the badness and inefficiency of so much of the work that is done for working men and working class homes?

Without Popular Education our carpenters and builders and labourers were concentrated upon their

work, and knowing it thoroughly, and taking some pleasure and pride in it, they naturally and unconsciously spread a robe of beauty over our land.

What else is it but this crude, superficial, universal mis-education that, absorbing our thoughts and dissipating our energies, makes so much of our labour unprofitable to the State; and so much of our leisure unprofitable to ourselves? What else is it but this same crude, superficial, universal mis-education that, flattering the ignorance and inflaming the envies of the masses, to-day shakes every social structure in Europe, and threatens everywhere to put the wise under the dominion of fools, the workers under the dominion of the talkers, the industrious under the dominion of the slothful, and the honest under the dominion of thieves; gives bounties to disease and weakness and laziness and ignorance, and lays burdens upon health and diligence and thrift and intelligence; discourages discipline and obedience, and exalts revolt and disorder; makes the servant the master, and the master the servant, and engages us all to turn the pyramid of society upside down, in the vain effort to make it stand upon its apex?

The effect of giving a disproportionate amount of compulsory superficial intellectual training to everybody, is to make it cheap and useless, alike to the majority of its possessors and to the community, while it draws away a great number of manual workers at a time when we are sorely in need of their vigorous muscles and nimble fingers. Superficial intellectual attainments are the veriest drug in the market. This is shown by the fact that you can get school teachers at £80 a year. You will not get them with the many qualifications and abilities which I have enumerated as necessary and desirable for this most important

work. Their average mental capacities and acquirements are indicated by the salary they will take, which is less than that of a tolerable typist, and of many other competitors in the less skilled kinds of brain work. We have here a means of gauging the general quality of the instruction and training that is being given to our millions of scholars. And when you require teachers with higher mental qualifications for your continuation classes, they are not to be found, and you have to provide fresh educational machinery for training them. That is, you have to call a further conscription of available manual labour, at the same time making it more scarce, inept, and discontented.

All these consequences and complications are only what we might have expected. For generations past, Nature has been busily fitting out the vast numbers of English children with physical and mental qualifications in rough approximation to the amounts of manual and brain work necessary to be done in the country. Her process has been that which I described in the imaginary coal and iron district, peopled exclusively with scholars and artists and thinkers. She has eliminated all those who were unfitted to the kinds of labour that necessarily had to be performed in that district, so that its resources might be developed to the general advantage.

The infinite multiplication of machines does not call for a higher average of mental and intellectual abilities. On the contrary, it calls for a diminished exercise of the brains, and for a greater number of workers with inferior mental capacities. It demands far less intelligence to tend a machine than to thatch a house, or shepherd a flock, or till a garden, or make a piece of hand lace.

Now Nature, being always busy at this process of elimination and adaptation, has probably sorted out your scholars for you in something approaching the right proportions. She has probably supplied you with something like fifteen per cent. of boys and girls whose brains are worth cultivating to their utmost capacity, and who will repay the State for all the education you can give them. She has probably supplied you with something like eighty-five per cent. of boys and girls with brains of lower and varying capacities, who should be educated according to these lower and varying capacities, and to do the work most urgently required by the State. Some of them with quite ordinary, or only second-rate, brains will be found to have some special gift, as for the stage, or for music, or for painting. These should be set apart for special training; many of them need not much more than to be left alone, for they will eagerly pursue and cultivate their natural gift. But all such boys and girls should be given the greatest chance to develop their one talent at the earliest age; for it is by removing all difficulties from their paths, and by fostering their special gifts to the best fulfilment—it is by such means, sir, that you will provide our common people with civilizing and satisfying pleasures, and educate them in the wise enjoyment of their leisure.

I will remind you, sir, that some months ago, you refused permission for children to play in five of Shakespeare's most popular plays. I will say again, very plainly, that you were then not only defeating the best educational training for some of the children in the work for which they were most fitted, but that you were also tending to defeat the best educational

training and wisest amusement for the masses of the adult population.

These children I have glanced at are, however, a very small minority of the many millions that come under your jurisdiction. In view, however, of the great value to the community of their special gifts, it is important that these children should be carefully selected and segregated, and that their Education should be specialized, and directed to the main end of cultivating their natural gifts.

The vast majority of the remaining many millions will necessarily be employed in manual labour, or in those unintellectual occupations where literary and educational accomplishments will be of no possible service to them, but will rather make them indisposed towards their work, and incapable of performing it with care and diligence. Having regard to the immense amount of skilled manual labour which is loudly crying out for muscles and hands in all parts of our Empire, what better service could you render to the State, and to these future workers, than to train as many of them as possible, and as early as possible, towards the practice of their future callings, so far as these can be taught at school; to abstain from educating the remainder of them *away* from their future callings; and, so far as manual labour is concerned, to set them all free to pursue it, in the measure that it will not injure average healthy children.

I think I see millions of willing little arms stretched out to you from all parts of the kingdom, beseeching you, "Give us something to *do*! Give us something to *make*, that we may early begin to take a pride in the work of our hands, and may not be ashamed of it!

Educate us chiefly in what it most concerns us to *do*, and cease trying to cram a quart of useless knowledge into our poor bewildered little pint-pot brains!"

That million, or thereabouts, of working-class homes that have to be built—why should not healthy working-class children be allowed to lend a hand in building them in their holiday time, provided only that care is taken that they are not overworked? And why should they not be paid for such a service to the working classes? The houses are urgently needed; the labourers are few; there are thousands of our elder children whose leisure hours would be far better employed in jobs of rough carpentry and masonry than in idling about the streets, and whose physical and moral health would gain rather than suffer by such employment. At the same time, these children would be given a direct and practical interest in solving what is, and will remain, one of the most pressing problems of our modern civilization—"How shall we house our workers in health and comfort and reasonable content, and add some daily beauty to their lives? How shall we make their dwellings wholesome and convenient to them, and pleasant to look upon, so that the outskirts of our towns may cause us to rejoice, and not to shudder, as we approach them?"

I suppose, sir, you will allow that to be one of the most pressing problems of our internal economy? That problem is not to be solved by "general" education; it is only to be solved by *work*—work that is specialized and trained to that end. "General" education will indeed make the evil more perceptible, but it will not cure it. It will merely tend to cause more discontent.

You have probably in your elementary schools, an overwhelming amount of healthy young muscular hu-

man material that could be trained to accomplish a great part of this most urgent national work. Why not select a large corps of your little scholars who are physically suited, give them a special training, and set them free at the age of twelve or fourteen to work for some six hours a day at the noble task of building serviceable and pleasing future homes for themselves and their brothers? By some such plan, carefully organized in all details, much of the dreary ugliness and disorder that sprawl over England, might be removed in the course of a generation; our streets of working-class homes, instead of straggling and huddling in long, bleak, drab, repulsive miles and acres of hideous blocks and alleys, might be transformed into ways and shapes of pleasantness, and throw their homely modest charm over the cleansed and redeemed countryside.

Again, the work could probably be made more attractive to the boys themselves than the "general" education which you are forcing upon them. Sir, this great national work is crying out to be done, and not one pair of hands, not one ounce of hard young muscle that might be put to it, can be diverted to useless "general" education, without an "economic injury" to the country. Children love to build houses; it is one of their earliest, strongest instincts. How this instinct has been thwarted and suppressed and perverted by Popular Education, may be seen by taking a walk in almost any town in the kingdom, and by observing the average style and design of the houses that are being built. Why should not this universal instinct and delight of childhood to build houses, be seized upon and guided towards this great result of national comfort and comeliness? The instinct is there, in the vast majority of your little scholars, waiting to be educated,

and inspired to do most fruitful handiwork. For it is useless that these working-class homes shall be well designed, if their actual builders are not inspired by a live faithful interest in what they are doing, if they do it carelessly and perfunctorily, with wandering brains, and untrained eyes and hands.

I entreat you, sir, to consider whether some such scheme as I am here advocating, could not be carried out with great educational advantage to the boys themselves, and with a certainty of bringing many direct and indirect benefits to the nation. Of what avail is it that you pour your copious showers of "general education" upon our masses, when every walk they take in the streets of our large towns is in itself, a "general education" in banal mechanical habits of thought and living, and an encouragement to spend their money and leisure in tawdry amusements, empty literature, and foolish delights?

I am sure you are equally desirous with myself that these million of homes for our workers should be built with dispatch, and finished within a reasonably early time; that when they are built, they should not appear as great thick slabs of dull, dead monumental meanness and monotony, laid flat upon English landscapes, or as swarms of perky, pretentious, bragging little jerry villa "residences"; but that they should have character, individuality, solidity, restfulness, and a varied simplicity; that they should give evidence that we have some sense of national architecture, and some craving for national beauty; that they should offer cheerfulness and comfort and every household convenience to their inmates, and a pleasing spectacle to those who view them from very near or from afar off.

I am sure all these consummations will seem desir-

able to you. And there are hundreds of thousands of your little scholars whose natural instinct and love of housebuilding, could be played upon and educated towards the attainment of these ends. Will you not remit something of your stern resolve to fill their heads with information about Cicero and Miss Corelli, and other such lofty recondite matter, and educate a sufficient number of them, from a quite early age towards the very fine art of putting bricks and mortar and bits of timber into pleasing shapes, and useful dwelling-places for them to inhabit when they shall become fathers and householders?

I have repeated and re-repeated all these arguments and illustrations *ad nauseam*; I have dwelt upon them with most irritating and wearisome reiteration, for which I have no excuse, except my conviction that you will not pay the least attention to what I am saying, and that therefore I am not making any demand upon your time and patience. But indeed I know of no other way of gaining some lodgment for truth in men's minds, but that of affirming it again and again, in the hope of rousing them at last, and delivering them from the stupors and catalepsies of fixed popular opinions and false beliefs.

It is no idle question I am raising, but one that deeply concerns the permanent welfare of the nation. The scattered patches and threats of coming social disaster, that were no larger than a man's hand when I began this letter, have gathered into great storm-clouds, and are spreading upwards all over our sky. Even those of us who have good reason for our strong faith in the sound instincts and commonsense of our working classes, are often constrained to ask ourselves, "How shall we avoid a social and economic deluge, a general

wreckage of the State?" Not by continued strikes and agitation, not by raising wages, not by shortening hours of work, but only by setting all our hands and muscles and brains to *make* those things which are necessary and useful to us all. Only in this way can comfort and plenty and leisure be secured for our working classes. The rate of pay is of quite secondary importance. We are daily seeing that the mere raising of wages only makes everything dearer and scarcer for everybody, and tends to shatter the whole social machine, as when the gas workers of Odessa voted themselves eighty pounds a month.

If the great body of the working classes in any community are doing and making necessary, useful, and beautiful things in right proportions, that community will be rich and comfortable and contented, whatever the rates of wages may be, whether a shilling a day or a pound. If they are not doing and making necessary and useful and beautiful things, that community will be poor and miserable and discontented, though every man in it was paid fifty pounds a day.

Again, if the great body of the working classes are doing and making necessary and useful and beautiful things, that community will have a corresponding amount of happy leisure. The amount of available leisure in a community is in direct and exact proportion to the amount of necessary and useful work done in it. Leisure is the payment of work. So much wholesome work done, so much wholesome play gained. My work provides another man with leisure and play; his work provides me with leisure and play.

I am speaking now of necessary, useful, wholesome, and beautiful work. A great part of the work that many of us are doing is neither necessary, useful,

wholesome, nor beautiful, and is done for people who also are doing work that is neither necessary, useful, wholesome, nor beautiful. Trace the amount of "economic injury" of that spectacle of imbecile tomfoolery which in the first year of the war was advertised to cost £15,000. Trace its success with the public to the false and superficial education they had received. Trace the growth and flourishing spread of all those fungus parasitic occupations to the same cause, to a system of Popular Education which teaches the people what they are only remotely concerned to *know*, before it teaches them what they are imperatively concerned to *do* and *make*; indeed, in many cases, is guiding them away from what they should make and do, is forbidding them any early practice of it, and is complacently boasting of the mischief it is doing its victims and to the community.

If we probe more deeply still, we can trace the instability of our social system to the general absence of any living credible religion amongst us; to the absence of an active working faith that the universe to its most ultimate atom, is mathematically set to force us towards right conduct, towards exact truthfulness and honesty with each other in all our dealings; that towards these issues, we are being relentlessly driven by the Eternal, by warnings, by checks, by disasters, and finally, if we will pay no heed, by world-revolutions and catastrophes. A social structure is sound in exact proportion to the amount of honesty amongst its inhabitants.

But any remarks and inquiries on this subject may be more fittingly offered, when occasion shall serve, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Reverend Dr. Clifford. I am inclined to think that, if a dozen years of Puritanism could be enforced upon this nation, it

would be a salutary punishment for its general lack of sincere, operative, religious belief, and its contempt for the Power that infects the world.

I began this letter by saying that I had no hope of persuading you to change the main features and drift of the Education Bill that you were then passing, but that my suggestions were offered for your consideration when the time should come for moulding your next measure. I have, therefore, counted you among my non-readers, or, at least, among my non-regarders, so far as what I have written relates to the Act that you are now about to administer. I am loth, however, to think that I have written in vain, and I continue to nurse my illusion that I may be of some service to you when you frame your next Education Bill. I am sure you will agree with me, that what I have said may be more opportunely considered in connexion with a future Education Act, than with the present one. And if, as a compliment to you as a scholar, I may draw upon my scanty store of classical knowledge for a motto suitable to that future Education Act, I would suggest, "*Ad vivendum velut ad natandum is melior onere liberior.*" I think Apuleius must have had your millions of little scholars in his mind, seeing how strong a tide of hard necessity and adverse economic forces they will have to swim against in the next generation; seeing also that, however that tide may turn in their favour, they will assuredly make all the easier headway and advance, the less they are burdened with useless superficial knowledge, and the less they are drawn away from the main business of their lives, and their useful service to the community.

Meantime, sir, you have behind you the full force and backing of popular and political approval. I will

therefore await, and will cheerfully submit to, the final arbitrament of facts, being always ready to change my opinions, at their earliest dictation. This gives me a pleasant feeling of superiority to the majority of my fellows, for I observe that most men are quite unable to change their opinions till long after their fallacy and absurdity has been proved by facts. The latest fact, declared in staring headlines in this evening's papers, is that 200,000 miners have struck at a moment when the nation is perilously in need of coal, and that two or three millions of workers are affected. They seem to be holding "continuation classes" of their own—in interstellar finance and economics.

Perhaps Nature is going to bring in a rude, long overdue Uneducation Bill of her own, with all sorts of arbitrary, penal clauses. Perhaps the Old Hussy, having been busy for some three centuries in showing us the evils and horrors of irresponsible Autocracy, is now preparing to show us the evils and horrors of irresponsible Democracy. For it is by means of these balancing alternations and reactions that She governs us; pitchforking us first upon one horn of a dilemma and then upon the other; correcting our fond notions of self-determination, until at last She gets us to go the way she would have us go, which is often not at all the way we want to go—witness the forecasts and declared aims of all the statesmen and political thinkers of all the countries during the last ten years.

CHAPTER VII

(Jan. 1919)

SUMMING-UP ON POPULAR EDUCATION IN OUR THEATRES.

**A matter of national concern—A mis-educated public—Vulgari-
zation of our national life by indiscriminate Popular Education
—Our masses badly trained, alike for useful productive work and
for wise amusement—A correct “attitude of mind” towards “the
facts of life”—A correct attitude of body even more desirable—
“Attitude of mind” of our popular audiences—Pressing invita-
tion to Minister of Education to become a playgoer—“Who has
been mis-educating these dear, good folk?”**

I COULD have been content to rest my indictment of our present system of Popular Education upon the condition of our theatres alone. This may appear to be a matter of small account in the great sum of our national life. Seemingly it is a matter of utter indifference, alike to our men of letters, to the great body of average intelligent Englishmen, and to the millions of unthinking playgoers themselves. It is, however, a matter of some importance to us who are striving, against insurmountable difficulties, to give England a school of modern drama and comedy worthy of a great nation; and alongside it a school of trained, intelligent, dignified Shakespearean acting in the popular theatres of London and our great cities.

It is not so small a matter as it appears. It is not a matter to be tossed aside with careless contempt, that

our masses are wasting the greater part of their evening leisure at entertainments that, with the rarest exceptions, may be described as rosy twaddle, amiable falsities, crude sensation, and, most popular of all, gaudy exhibitions of undisguised licentiousness and empty imbecile tomfoolery, produced with the Lord Chamberlain's authority and passport.

I will not raise any standards of super-morality or super-intellectualism. I will not lay upon average imperfect human nature, burdens too greivous to be borne. Least of all, will I offensively claim to be better or wiser than my neighbours. I have always humbly endeavoured to follow the sage counsel of Ecclesiastes: "Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise; why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" I take some satisfaction in remembering that I have scrupulously and consistently obeyed these two golden rules of the Preacher.

Waiving the question of whether the condition of our theatres can be safely neglected by our politicians and social reformers; granted that many of the abuses and futilities that I have glanced at, are unavoidable; granted, with all my heart, that a supply of good tomfoolery, in its subordinate place and reasonable proportion, is desirable, and even necessary, to ease and cheer our people—putting aside these aspects of the matter for the moment, what would you say, sir, of the staple of our theatrical amusements as a gauge and indicator of the level of Popular Education, and of the shape and direction it is giving to the tastes and pleasures of our masses?

Perhaps in the months that have passed since I sent you the earlier parts of this letter, you have conquered the natural repugnance which most intelligent English-

men feel against entering the theatres of their native land, or rather of entering them in an intelligent frame of mind; perhaps you have tasted of the dainty dishes that the bulk of our theatre-goers most relish in our most popular theatres, and have formed your own judgment upon them.

Would you call it, sir, a well-educated public, that for the past twenty years has further and further banished Shakespeare from our stage, and driven him to odd holes and corners; that regards him as a bore and an affliction; that for the most part cannot even understand his lines, or recognize and comprehend his characters, much less enjoy his humour and wisdom and philosophy of life; that for the past twenty years has also increasingly rejected all modern plays that deal thoughtfully and searchingly with our modern life, whether in comedy or drama; that coughs and fidgets at any scene or character that demands a moment's exercise of thought; that rocks with imbecile laughter at senseless topical catchwords and scarcely-veiled obscenity; that revels in the gradual corruption of the English language; that has exalted the gagging, blatant, empty-pated comedian and pretty doll chorus girl to the empty chairs of Kean, Macready, Irving, and Siddons; that takes its chief evening delight in mafficking at gaudy, costly, mindless spectacles, whose very titles stink with witless vulgarity?

Would you call it in any sense an *educated* public? Would you say that it is in the way to become an educated public? Would you not call it a badly *mis*-educated public? If you were a foreign visitor, benevolently disposed towards England—say from France, where the modern drama is a recognized part of the national literature, where the dramatist is esteemed

according to his rank as a man of letters—would you not join me, sir, in urging our Minister of Education to take cognizance of this national disgrace, and to place it in relation to his whole system of popular instruction?

May I again remind you, sir, that this condition of our English stage has developed with the increasing spread of Popular Education, and seems likely to develop still further on the same lines, according to the increasing amount of "general" education that our masses receive from your hands?

No man could be more desirous than myself that our workers should have shorter hours and more abundant leisure. They do not wish it for themselves more than I wish it for them. But surely increased leisure is a doubtful boon if it is unwisely spent. If our masses are incapable of spending their leisure wisely, it is unkindness to them and a very palpable "economic injury" to the country, to give them further opportunities of wasting their time.

I will not believe it. I prefer to think that they are being badly educated, alike for the useful productive work that alone can give them shorter hours, and for the wise amusement that alone can justify them in demanding more time for play.

I do not decry Popular Education in itself. I have gladly acknowledged that in many ways, it has raised, and enlarged, and cleansed the lives of our lower classes. Every system of Popular Education must necessarily have the defects of its qualities, and a reverse side to its virtues. But our present system by its want of discrimination and specialization; by its blind worship of advanced "general" education for every child, irrespective of his capacity to receive it, or to profit by it;

its neglect to train hands and muscles for their proper work, and brains for their proper work; its fatuous discouragement of manual labour for healthy boys and girls, to their own life-long injury, and the injury of the State; its curious conceit that by tying children's hands behind their backs it quickens their mental activities, and that by depositing heaps of miscellaneous knowledge in their brains, it swells their cerebral hemispheres, and deepens the convolutions in the cortex; its vulgarization of our whole national life by spreading a dead level of spurious and superficial accomplishments—it is by the operation of these mischievous whimsies, that our present system of Popular Education has, after two generations, trained nearly every worker in the kingdom into active and ceaseless discontent with his work, and has stored a powder magazine under the foundations of civilization and order.

You are reported, sir, to say that the cure for all this unrest “is an attitude of mind, and an increased capacity for coming to a judicial and judicious decision upon the facts of life.” Everybody will cordially assent that a changed attitude of mind is urgently needed. But how that is to be brought about by increased “general” education from discontented, half-educated, mis-educated teachers, I see not. However, we shall watch the effect of your prescription with earnest prayers that it may prove remedial, and that we shall witness a sudden and startling adoption of this most desirable “attitude of mind” and a consequent “increased capacity for coming to a judicial and judicious decision upon the facts of life.”

The one prominent “fact of life” that everywhere stares us in the face, is that there is a tremendous

amount of hard, dirty, disagreeable manual work to be done in every house, in every street, in every field in England. Not a single one of us can be at our ease, until that work is tackled and accomplished. On renewed consideration of the whole problem, would you not say, sir, that what is required is not so much an attitude of *mind* towards all this necessary manual labour, as an attitude of *body*?

I do not perceive much likelihood of our masses coming to a judicious and judicial decision upon this all-important and most pressing "fact of life." All the present indications are that they are every day coming to more and more injudicious and injudicial decisions upon it. Might we not now, with your permission, cease to contemplate all this accumulating mass of necessary work from lofty attitudes and altitudes of *mind*, and putting our *bodies* into correct postures, strip off our coats, and tuck up our shirt-sleeves, and *do* it with all our might? For assuredly, unless this work is done, and done quickly, we shall presently have to call in the soldier—which is what we all wish to avoid.

Meantime, sir, if you wish to get a trustworthy estimate of the general disposition of our public to take up a correct attitude of mind towards the facts of life, and to weigh them judiciously and judically, I again beg you to pay a round of visits to our most popular theatres. Most heartily do I sympathize with you in your efforts to get our populace to take up this correct "attitude of mind" towards the facts of life. For thirty-five years, I also, have been fitfully and despairingly persuading our public to adopt this "attitude of mind" in the theatre. You will guess, then, with what interest I am watching your experiments on the larger stage of our national life. Like you, I had an ingen-

nous faith that the spread of Popular Education would automatically train our masses into this salutary relationship to the facts of life.

Certainly our theory is right. I will admit no doubts of its soundness. After all the time and trouble and money we have spent upon Popular Education, the least it can do is to confirm our theory by results. Clearly, it must be the facts of life that are wrong. We must adjust and dispose them in a proper and respectful attitude towards our theories. The root of the mischief is that our present system of Popular Education tends largely to divert our masses from facts, especially from all unpleasant facts. The primary fact of all facts, discovered at a very early period in the history of our race, is the very plain one: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." I see it making disrespectful grimaces at your continuation classes.

However, I hope that in consideration for one, who in the small and limited sphere of the theatre, is, like yourself, trying to place the public in a correct attitude of mind towards facts, and also as affording you valuable evidence of the effect of Popular Education on the masses—for these reasons, I hope, you may be induced at some personal inconvenience, to visit our huge popular theatres, and judge for yourself. You will find many things that you can approve and enjoy—if you divest yourself of every attitude and attribute of mind. You will find a good-natured, decently behaved public, with much broad, kindly, English humour, and a hearty appreciation of such jests as do not contain any approach to wit. But an *educated* public! *Educated?* If you were that benevolent foreigner, and were taken to a round of the popular evening entertainments most frequented by the masses of our large towns, you would

surely exclaim: "Where have these people been to school? Who has been mis-educating these dear good folk down to this shocking level of dull vulgarity, empty folly, and bad taste?"

If after paying such a round of visits, and after watching those items of the evening's programme which are most relished by those who have been taught in our national schools at the expense of the State—if you will then declare that you are satisfied with the results and tendencies of our system of Popular Education, as a preparation for the duties of life, and for the wise enjoyment of leisure, I will wholly submit myself to your judgment, and will confess that I do not understand what Education is. It is a word in some foreign language that has no meaning for me.

SUMMING-UP ON A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

It is discouraging to find that the millennium is again postponed. However, we are to have a welcome first instalment of it in the League of Nations. The Peace Conference, with a true instinct for essentials, gave it the first consideration, deeming that if we could only frame a League of Nations, the finishing of the war was a quite secondary and negligible matter.

It is true that a solid world peace seems to be indefinitely postponed. But we have a League of Nations. It is true that while we have been talking, Germany has been manœuvring to avoid the consequences of her defeat. But we have put our signatures to a League of Nations. It is true that all Europe is smouldering with revolution and the sparks of future wars. But we have framed a League of Nations. It is true that our sea supremacy is threatened and perhaps lost.

But what need will there be for a British navy now we have a League of Nations?

It is distressing to find that there have been some quibbling and friction about the constitution and scope of the League of Nations. But the scheme has the warm support of my Aunt Julia, whose husband was eaten by cannibals, and who therefore speaks with inside knowledge of the subject. Those objectors who have remained deaf to President Wilson's powerful arguments would, I feel sure, be convinced by my Aunt Julia. She very pertinently asks, why a League of Nations was not established in the very dawn of history, and then there would have been no wars at all. She is lending the movement all the weight of her moral influence, and all the vigour of her tongue. If any further doubts or dissensions should arise, I hope the assembled statesmen may be persuaded to call my Aunt Julia to their councils. Her voluble optimism admirably qualifies her to deal with the question.

It will gratify President Wilson to know that whatever difficulties or disasters the League of Nations may have to encounter, he can always be assured of the active sympathy and co-operation of my Aunt Julia. From the time when the question was first bruited, she has been enthusiastically in its favour. So much so, that she has declared throughout, if we could only get a League of Nations, she did not care what its conditions might be, or what nations came into it, or whether it would work or not. The main thing was to draw up some document, call it a League of Nations, and then defy any nation to go to war. I mention this to show how whole-heartedly she has supported President Wilson.

I have been so much impressed by Aunt Julia's ar-

guments, that I have commissioned one of our leading artists to paint a great allegorical picture, representing President Wilson's triumphant return from the Paris Conference, mounted on *equum csinum* with blinkers over its eyes and ears, Aunt Julia riding pillion behind him, her one arm tightly clasping him to signify universal brotherhood, her other arm waving a white flag. When this noble piece of symbolism is enshrined, as I confidently hope it will be, in the Capitol at Washington or the Boston Museum, it will commemorate, in a vivid and appropriate way, the founding of the League of Nations. It will also remain as a rebuke to those Americans who are telling President Wilson, that it was more important to secure a just and early peace, than to waste the precious weeks in arranging the future of the planet on paper.

In the meantime we have a League of Nations. The first thing that strikes us, is that it isn't a League of Nations at all. It is a very complicated alliance between the Allied powers, leaving all the real and permanent difficulties of the main question unsolved, and opening up many new provocative questions for future settlement. However, the League of Nations is an accomplished fact, or rather an accomplished form of words, which, we hope, may control facts and events, and shape them to its ends. We have marshalled a formidable array of arguments in favour of governing the world by a Committee. All that events and facts have to do, is to marshal themselves to suit our views. The onus lies upon them.

The future peace of the world rests upon the great solid arch which this war has built across the Atlantic, a good understanding between America and Britain. While that arch remains, with beloved France to sup-

port it, the peace of the world is assured, so far as it exists between nations. The League of Nations will be successful if, and as long as, that arch is unshaken. If that arch should crack, we may have to change our title to "A League for setting the Nations at Loggerheads."

THE LAST APPEAL

The vast web of our national life is woven all of one piece. Tattered and torn as it is in places, composed of divers ill-assorted warps and wefts, and many coloured threads that hold loosely together, it is yet one indivisible tissue and fabric. We are all members one of another, whether we will it or not. The destiny of each one of us is inseparable from the destiny of the British Empire. The destiny of the British Empire is the destiny of all the citizens within its bounds. We clearly perceived this during the war, and therefore we gained the victory.

Straggling and unmethodical as these thoughts may seem to be, they are all connected and gathered up in one issue—Patriotism or Internationalism? Either by our own considered decision, looking before and after, and choosing our way, or, carried along in helpless, purposeless confusion by the drift and hustle of events, we shall find ourselves obliged to take one road or the other. As our course is steered towards Patriotism or towards Internationalism, so will all our internal and external policy be conceived, shaped, and executed; so will all our national aims and activities be clarified, unified, and polarized.

Education, Reconstruction, Army and Navy Organization, Financial and Economic order and stability, Ag-

ricultural Development, the Government of Ireland, Our future rule in India, Colonial expansion, Commercial Tariffs, Mercantile Shipping and Overseas Trade—all these and a hundred other national projects cannot be planned on any secure and permanent basis, until we have made up our mind whether we will take the road of Patriotism or of Internationalism.

Chief of all, this is a question that concerns Capital and Labour. How can any durable relations be established between them, what can there be but increasing tumult and strife, till we know whether we are travelling towards the one goal, or towards the other? For as we make our way towards Patriotism or towards Internationalism, so will every interest of Capital and Labour in the kingdom be affected, regulated, and disposed. The question of Capital and Labour is fundamentally the question of Patriotism or Internationalism. All these questions are one question. They throw their roots into the farthest corners of our empire, and gather themselves up into the one stem and trunk of our national life.

Not on that August day four years and a half ago, when we took our swift unfaltering choice, flung all we had into the balance, and dared Eternal Justice to tilt the scales against us—not then were we more remorselessly challenged to make an irrevocable decision upon which all our future will depend.

If the experience of these great events does not draw us all together in closer brotherhood, in unity of clear, national vision and unity of national effort, then we have fought and suffered in vain. We might almost as well have lost the war. For what shall we have gained by escaping the ordered tyranny and slavery of Ger-

man militarism, if we are now to be submitted to the disordered tyranny and raving misrule of social anarchy?

There stand the two signposts, the one pointing us to Patriotism, the other to Internationalism. Let us make our steadfast deliberate choice, or inevitably it will be made for us by the irresistible rush of events.

Whose voices are these that hail us from far and near; from ages long gone by, and from our yesterdays of supernal endurance and valour in France; from every spot on earth's circumference where Englishmen have adventured, and suffered, and fought, and conquered, and ruled for England; from every grave in the deep, or in sacred shrines, or in foreign dust where deathless Englishmen are laid, and, being dead, do yet speak to us with most authentic and commanding tongues?

These are they, who from the dim horizons of our past, through all our stormy and glorious centuries, on battlefields, on the quarter-deck, in council and senate and on the throne, in cloisters of learning and philosophy, in the halls of justice, in the laboratories of science, in the workshops and furnaces of sweated thought, in the chambers of imagination and the galleries of song—these are the statesmen and rulers, and warriors, and seamen, and poets, and thinkers, and explorers, and inventors, and merchants, who have created this empire, and stone by stone, and story by story, have built up and filled with riches and treasures this home of our race, this clustering citadel, this refuge for humanity, this sanctuary of ordered government.

These are your true leaders, O people of England, if you will but follow them! These are your faithful teachers, if you will but learn from them! These are

your wise counsellors, if you will but give heed to them! These are your lawful rulers who shall lead you back to peace and security and wide prosperity, if you will but obey them! Never has any nation in the past mustered such a company of her sons to span the world with the greatness and worth of her achievements, and to civilize and enlarge the peoples by the benignity of her sway. Nor will any nation arise in the future to pour from her womb, a kindred breed of famous men to claim for their land so sure and proud a title to enduring admiration and renown, and the praise and honour of mankind.

This innumerable cloud of witnesses visit and surround us, rehearsing their deeds, counting over the sum of their labours and sacrifices for us, and charging our memories with the magnitude of the price they have paid for our ransom from servitude and barbarism. They meet us in council this day, and here assembled with us under these two opposing signposts, do now call upon us to say which road we will take—Patriotism or Internationalism?

Name them over, one by one, the long marvellous roll of our imperishable dead. What one is there amongst them whom Englishmen and all men hold in honour that does not, with solemn urgency and clairvoyant vision purged from all mortal obscurities, call upon us to take the road of Patriotism?

Listen to the two mightiest voices that have spoken in our language. First, hear a warning from him who in his own name sums up England and Patriotism. In the brag and froth of Jack Cade, he speaks with the very mouths of them that are to-day promising an International paradise to ignorance and sloth and sedition:

"Be brave then, for your captain is brave, and vows reformation. There shall be in England, seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it felony to drink small beer; all the realm shall be in common; and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass; there shall be no more money; all shall eat and drink of my score; and I will apparel them all in one livery that they may agree like brothers and worship me, their lord."

"As for these silken-coated slaves, I pass not;
It is to you, good people, that I speak
Fellow kings, I tell you that Lord Say hath gelded
the commonwealth."

"Now show yourselves men; 'tis for liberty.
We will not leave one lord, one gentleman,
Spare none but such as go in clouted shoon."

"Then are we in order, when most we are most out of order. Come, march forward! Let's go fight, but first set London Bridge on fire, and if you can, burn down the Tower too. Go some and pull down the Savoy, others to the inns of court. Down with them all. Away! Burn all the records of the realm: my mouth shall be the parliament of England."

"And henceforth all things shall be in common."

"The proudest peer in the realm shall not wear a head on his shoulders unless he pays me tribute; there shall not a maid be married, but she shall pay to me her maidenhead ere they have it; men shall hold of me in capite; and we charge and command that their wives be as free as heart can wish."

"Soldiers, defer the spoil of the city until night! Up Fish Street! Down Saint Magnus Corner! Kill and knock down! Throw them into the Thames!"

It is the very tune and creed of advancing Internationalism. We are hearing it daily, muttered or blatant, in all the cities of Europe. Internationalists will doubtless think it advisable to burn every copy of Shakespeare; for until he is abolished, his sovereign instinct for what is fundamental and permanent in human nature, pours its fiercest, wisest mockery upon their doctrines.

Next, give heed to the second of our sons of light, whose voice was ever raised for liberty of thought and spiritual enfranchisement. Hear once more the great prophecy that England has so often justified since he spoke it. Do not our hearts burn within us, and our eyes gather with tears, when remembering what England has done in these last years, we take it again upon our lips, and declare with one voice that it shall yet receive its supreme fulfilment by this people?

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle renewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

Choose, England!

I lay down my pen at an hour when no man can discern what baffling and formidable shape the emergent future may take, or in what new perplexities and perils our country may be involved. At such a time, our notions and opinions are but as dead leaves blown frustrate in a destroying hurricane of events that we can neither escape nor control. We can but lay hold of the great changeless elementary rules of life and conduct, whereby men and nations have stayed and established themselves in the past. To those great changeless elementary rules of life and conduct, which we did not fashion, which we cannot annul, upon which all civilization and ordered human society must be founded—to these great primary absolute precepts and laws, I have tried to appeal throughout this letter,

and have rested my arguments upon their eternal validity.

If, sir, in those parts of my letter which treat of Popular Education and its ultimate effects upon the national welfare, I have shown some want of respect and urbanity, I ask your pardon. I am sure you will count this a small matter in comparison with the importance of the issues I have raised.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

TO THE RIGHT HONBLE. H. A. L. FISHER,
President of the Board of Education.

